THE GURU IN SIKHISM.

THESIS

presented for the degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

by

WILLIAM OWEN COLE.

Department of Theology and Religious Studies,
The University of Leeds.

May 1975.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

DR. G. S. MANSUKHANI.
Tel.: (01) 455-3752
12 The Drive, Golders Green, London N.W.11

CONTENTS.

Chapter No.		Page No.
	Introduction	ii
1.	The Antecedents of Sikhism	1
2.	The Concept of Guru in the Teachings of Guru Nanak.	23
3.	The Concept of Guru in the Post-Nanak Sabads of the Adi Granth and in the Dasam Granth.	59
4.	The Guru Granth Sahib in Orthodox Sikh Worship.	107
5.	The Namdhari Concept of Guru.	113
6.	The Concept of Guruship in Recent and Contemporary Writings.	123
7.	Conclusions.	145
	Glossary.	153
	Bibliography.	161

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

THE GURU IN SIKHISM.

Abstract.

This piece of research confines itself to one particular aspect of the Sikh religion, the concept of guruship. The approach is principally theological though Sikh practices and historical influences are examined as well as beliefs.

Before turning to the major part of the work the postulates that Guru Nanak was the disciple of Kabir and was attempting to construct a deliberate syncretism from the religions of Hinduism and Islam are discussed. However, attention is focussed mainly upon the scriptural teachings of the Gurus to discover the basis of the Sikh concept and to find out whether it underwent change during the period between Nanak's call and Guru Gobind Singh's death in 1708 C. E. The views of other writers of early times and also of recent and contemporary scholars have also been studied in order to ascertain whether they remain faithful to the scriptural position or have developed it or modified it.

For the orthodox Sikh the *Adi Granth* is now the Guru, therefore attention is given to the respect accorded to the sacred book in worship. A chapter is also given to the Namdharis, a sub-group with a distinctive concept of guruship. They believe that the line of human Gurus has not yet come to an end and reject the doctrine that the *Adi Granth* is the Guru.

Suggestions are made, at the end of the thesis, of certain aspects related to the concept of guruship which might profit from further research.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary

THE GURU IN SIKHISM.

Introduction.

This study was undertaken after six years of friendship with Sikhs in Leeds during which a deep interest in their religion developed and some serious discussions about their faith and its practices ensued. The opportunity also came to spend a fortnight living with Sikhs and talking with some of their college and university teachers in Amritsar, Chandigarh and Delhi.

In the course of discussions and reading the question of guruship continually arose, especially when the acquaintance of Namdhari Sikhs was made in Leeds and the Punjab and one learned of their belief in a living Guru.

These first contacts with Sikhs in Britain coincided with the publication of Professor Hew McLeod's important book 'Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion' which itself brought into prominence the issue of guruship, though perhaps in a way which the scholar did not expect. The controversy surrounding his book had the effect of stressing the attention of Sikhs towards Guru Nanak and provided an interesting example of the possible relationship between personal faith and scholarship. Professor McLeod's objectivity was that of a person respectful of the Sikh faith but detached from it. Few Sikhs encountered by the present writer have been able to speak in an objective manner about the second part of his book because of the emotions stirred up by his treatment of the historical Nanak. Both Professor McLeod's book and its reception by Sikhs in their separate ways seemed to suggest that the concept of Guru was one worthy of attention.

Though the Nanak of personal faith receives little direct treatment in the following pages he is clearly an important object of piety, hence the criticisms and expressions of disgust which accompanied Professor McLeod's volume. Something of this devotion is to be found in the writings of most Sikh authors who have been consulted. The attitudes of the majority of Sikhs living in Leeds can only be surmised from garlanded pictures of Guru Nanak in their homes and the devotion which manifests itself as they touch the base of the flagstaff or the step of the Gurdwara or bow before the Guru Granth Sahib.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Writers, such as those consulted and referred to in chapter six of this essay, displayed a variety of ideas on the subject of guruship and it was these and especially a few sentences written by Dr. Mujeeb which finally encouraged the choice of this subject. He wrote of the need "to determine what Guru Nanak meant by the term 'Guru', when he himself had no spiritual instructor or guide."[1] This, in a sentence is the initial purpose of this piece of work, though it is developed to include the views of other writers in the Adi Granth and of contemporary or recent scholars as well as the attitudes of worshippers and Namdharis.

The approach which has been adopted in this study of the concept of guruship has been to begin by asking the questions who was the Guru of Nanak and what were the influences which moulded his teachings? Western writers seemed, in the main, to accept his dependence upon Kabir, Sikh scholars to a man rejected it. What was the solution to this opposition of views?

The ground having been cleared it is then necessary to discover what the term guru means to Nanak and to the later Masters whose writings are contained in the Adi Granth, Angad, Amar Das, Ram Das, Arjan and Tegh Bahadur. Sikhs believe that the same light passed from one Guru to another, the form alone changing. This doctrine will have to be tested against the Sikh scriptures. Guru Gobind Singh's teaching, though not included in the Adi Granth is also considered to be the same as Nanak's and his concept of guruship will also be studied.

In early and in modern times the concept of guru has been a focal point for Sikh and non-Sikh writers, from the bards whose hymns are included in the Adi Granth to Dr. Loehlin.[2] Their contributions display a considerable variety of interpretations and it will have to be seen how they compare with the views of the Gurus themselves. Perhaps the most interesting variant is not a book but the Namdhari movement which bears witness to the belief in a living Guru. Sikh orthodoxy, however, regards the bani contained in the Adi Granth as the Guru, hence the name Guru Granth Sahib which is given to it and the respect which is accorded to it. In finding out what is the theoretical attitude to the sacred book and the

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

practical way in which Sikhs regard it will also be studied as far as possible, though this important aspect is one which might merit attention in its own right by someone able to visit gurdwaras in India, Thailand, Britain and elsewhere and capable of holding confidential interviews with a cross section of Sikh men and women.

A glossary is placed at the end of this dissertation. With a few exceptions this is confined to Sikh terms found in the foregoing chapters.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Footnotes to Introduction.

1. *Guru Nanak His Life, Times and Teachings*, New Delhi, 1969.
2. C. H. Loehlin, *The Granth of Guru Gobind Singh and the Khalsa Brotherhood*, 1971.

The following abbreviations have been used throughout this essay:-

A. G. for page numbers of the *Adi Granth*. One wishes that this use of page numberings might become accepted practice. It would make the use of footnotes and the location of quotations much easier. Each copy of the *Adi Granth* is identical, possessing 1430 pages and Manmohan Singh's translation used in this study, respects the page divisions so the request is not a difficult one to comply with. At present there is no uniform way of giving scriptural references.

J. for the *Japji* (e.g. J5 signifies the fifth *pauri* of the *Japji.*) This abbreviation is almost completely confined to quotations in chapter two.

M. refers to pages from *The Sikh Religion* by Macauliffe from which the quotations from the writings of Guru Gobind Singh used in chapter three have been taken.

P. (e.g. p. 1245) refers to the page of the *Adi Granth* from which the quotation is taken.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

THE ANTECEDENTS OF SIKHISM.

Chapter One.

General Influences.

Upon meeting people from the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent one is quickly aware of the wide and often deep knowledge which many of them possess not only of their own religion but also of the other faiths present in their environment. Perhaps the younger generation of Muslims growing up in the virtually monolithic culture of Pakistan know little of Hinduism or Sikhism but this is not true of their grandparents who can still explain the main tenets of these religions. Pakistan, however, is exceptional. Certainly among Indian Muslims, Hindus, Parsis, Sikhs and Christians whatever their attitude to the other religions which comprise their multi-faith culture, there is knowledge and frequently tolerance.

Though he lived five hundred years ago Nanak must be put into this category of the broadly and deeply informed Indian; a stranger to the western Christian until recently sectarian in his outlook and still ignorant of other Christian denominations even when he is no longer hostile or suspicious.

The Janam Sakhis,[1] or 'life evidences' which provide most of the available biographical information about Guru Nanak, describe encounters with Buddhists in Ceylon, Muslims in India, Baghdad and Arabia, brahmins at Hardwar and Benares, and yogis (described as Siddhas) at Achal in district Gurdaspur.

The reliability of the Janam Sakhis has been seriously questioned and is a subject of dispute but the hymns of Guru Nanak are not open to the same doubt. These contain many passing references to Muslim names for God or the names of Hindu deities and to various practices of both religions but there are also passages indicative of knowledge and not of a mere ability to drop names.

Most notable perhaps is the poem known as the Siddha Gosht which outlines Nanak's teachings in response to questions put to him by Charpat and Loharipa, two members of this yogi sect. References to yogic garb, the life

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

of detachment from society, the teaching of Gorakhnath, methods of sense control and concentration and the preservation of his teaching in yogic terms for apologetic or dialetical purposes indicate a more than general knowledge of their life or teaching.[2]

As for Hinduism in general in his composition Oankar he sets out his exposition of the word Om in a way which indicates awareness of its use in Hindu thought;[3] in the Japji[4] there is use of the trimurti myth; there are frequent allusions to the vedas[5] and to the six philosophical systems[6] and particular rejection of Samkhya teaching with its stress on dualism and its acceptance of atheism.[7] It might be argued that the Mool Mantra (discussed later in detail) presupposes a complete familiarity with Indian religious thought from vedic times to his own fifteenth century world. Indeed, it is the assertion of this section that the most important antecedent of Sikhism is the long, rich, varied and living tradition of Indian religious thought.

However, he was selective in his attitude to the traditions he inherited. As a Bedi-Kshatriya he had the right or duty of studying the Vedas but according to the Laws of Manu[8] it was not proper for him to teach them and become an imparter of religious truth. When he did become a guru he taught in the vernacular of his native region or the language of the district he was visiting, and here he has much in common with near or contemporary representatives of the bhakti tradition such as Chaitanya, Ramanand, Kabir or Tulsi Das. Unlike the last of these, Nanak rejected the social inferiority of women, and varnashram dharma.[9]

Of his similarity to Kabir so much has been written, often asserting that Nanak was the disciple of Kabir, a separate section must be devoted to an examination of this evidence. Meanwhile we must consider the assertion of Muslim influence.

The claim is frequently made that Sikhism is a conscious or accidental synthesis or Hinduism and Islam or, at least, Nanak was influenced by Muslim thought. After all the Sikh religion is strongly monotheistic and the teachings of Nanak are egalitarian and in favour of the householder-saint ideas found also in Islam. There are also parallels between the sufi Khanqah and the Sikh sangat, the Sufi shaikh and the Sikh guru. These are all acknowledged by

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Dr. Mujeeb[10] only to be rejected. He regards Nanak's revelation as an 'occurence of the heart', one of a kind with that of the Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad and others and explains Muslim-Sikh similarities in terms of a universal revelation. Could it be proved that Nanak experienced Sufism in such a way that it provided a striking novelty, as Dr. Mujeeb puts it, in terms of monotheistic expression or spiritual insight, then the impact of Islam upon the Guru might be accepted, but by this time the faith was a commonplace, its sharpness had gone. Dr. Mujeeb points out that by now it was forbidden to use the egalitarian greeting A-salaam o-alaikum in court;[11] the Medhavis who offended kings and courtiers by insisting on it were persecuted for their stubborness.

'A Study in Syncretism' is the sub-title J. B. Noss gives his chapter on Sikhism in 'Man's Religion'[12] This is also the view expressed by Geoffrey Parrinder in one of his books[13] where he describes it as 'a deliberate and recent syncretism.' De Bary[14] also refers to 'the syncretist religions of Kabir and Guru Nanak.' When one examines the case carefully it seems to rest on two arguments: first, the claim that the guru of Nanak was Kabir, a Muslim disciple of Ramanand, and secondly the well-known words of the Guru uttered at the beginning of his ministry 'There is neither Hindu nor Mussulman.' The relationship of Kabir and Nanak must await discussion. Of the second piece of evidence there are a few things which may be said. First, the Janam Sakhi statement is more extensive. The Guru said, "There is neither Hindu nor Mussulman so whose path shall I follow? I shall follow God's path. God is neither Hindu nor Mussulman and the path I follow is God's." Taken in full the passage might suggest two things. First in its contemporary context, there was not a true Hindu or Muslim to be found capable of leading him in the path of pure religion. (The Janam Sakhis and his hymns contain many criticisms of the falseness of the Hinduism and Islam of his day). Secondly, and more likely, it asserts that the religion of God lies beyond Hinduism and Islam, that is beyond vedic or qur'anic knowledge, beyond prayer forms, sacrifice and pilgrimage. The tendency of Muslims and Hindus to stop short of the truth is something which, again and again the Guru asserts, ridicules, deplores and attempts to eradicate.[15] It is arguable that Sikhism, from the time of the fifth Guru moved in a consciously anti-Muslim direction but in the early period

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

there is one belief and one practice which is common to Islam and Sikhism, namely, the insistence that God is one and a creator and the use of prayer beads. The Sikh seli or mala has 108 beads unlike the Muslims tasbir (99) but identical with the number on Hindu malas. The Hindu ideas of Karma, samsara and moksha and a cyclical view of time are basic to the Guru's teaching. It is unlikely that a synthesis which drew so heavily upon despised Hinduism could expect much success in the world where the Muslim presence was becoming that of conqueror rather than humble seeker after truth. The one point of identity becomes less certain when examined in greater detail. Though Muslim names are applied to him[16] most commonly God is called Nam or the Sat Guru and when his qualities are stated they tend to be negatively expressed in terms which reject certain Hindu ideas. In fact one might say that the Karta purukh of Guru Nanak's Mool Mantra is more a refutation of Samkhya atheism and dualism, than anything else[17] and that the rest of this Mantra is an attempt to pass beyond a Hindu thought which sets at one level the gods and at another the Supreme Being, Brahman, neuter and detached. Of course one cannot say that the Muslim presence did not influence Nanak but it does not seem necessary to look beyond Hinduism to discover the course of his thought even about a creator God. In the Svetasvatara Upanishad the mighty God is higher than Brahman, higher than the Golden Embryo.[18] He is the maker of all,[19] formless and unborn[20] and man is freed from sorrow by the grace of the Creator.[21] At the end of this upanishad the importance of the guru is stressed.[22] Brahman as source of all being is also to be found in such upanishads as the Chandogya and Katha.[23] In the latter emphasis is again placed on the self-revelation of God to whom he will[24] as the only way he may be known. In Ramanuja's commentary on the Bhagavadgita,[25] God is creator, the inner Ruler and Main Cause upon whom all existence depends. Again the dependence of Arjuna upon God for liberating grace is emphasised.[26] It may be argued that the bhagats of medieval India were all influenced by Islam, or those of South India by Christianity. Even if this claim were accepted there is enough evidence to show that in this bhakti strand of Indian religion Nanak's concept of God is anticipated.

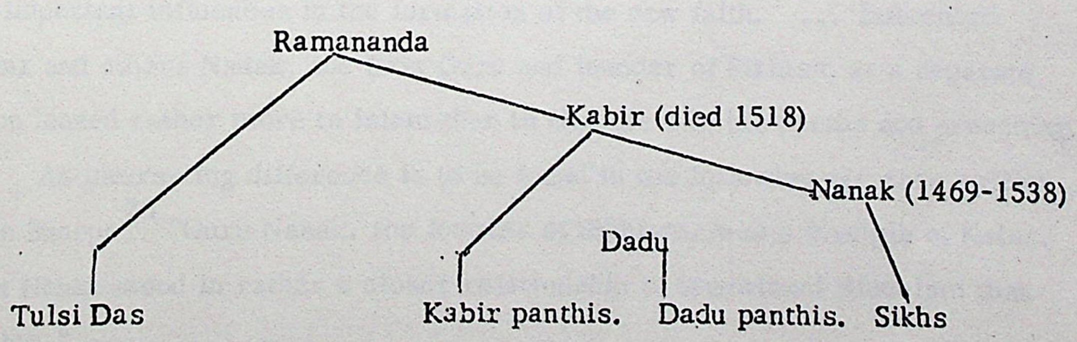
Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Kabir and Guru Nanak.

It is usual for recent writers on Hinduism or Indian religions to refer in passing to Sikhism and describe it as an example of Muslim-Hindu synthesis or at least to suggest it by asserting that the Guru of Nanak was the Muslim, Kabir.[27]

An early twentieth century example of this tendency is to be found in J. N. Farquhar's Primer of Hinduism,[28] "The deistic movement springs from Kabir the Muhammadan (sic) weaver who was once one of the apostles of Ramananda. Here Muhammadan influence makes itself distinctly felt. For though Kabir was a disciple of Ramananda, though he calls God by the name Rama and has Vedantic ideas, he will have nothing to do with the doctrine of incarnations, and he condemns idolatry and caste with unsparing voice." He goes on to describe the Kabir panth as it existed at the beginning of the twentieth century and say that despite his teachings "the Hindu and Muhammadan members of his church have separate monasteries and have little in common except their devotion to their Master". Examining this influence of Kabir upon Indian religion J. N. Farquhar continues "No direct influence exerted by Kabir, however, is equal to that indirect influence which has arisen through the founding of the Sikh sect in the Punjab by his disciple, Nanak."

The relationship is expressed diagramatically on page 145, thus:



J. N. Farquhar has been one of the greatest influences upon British students of Indian religions and one cannot help suspecting that his views have been taken on trust and transmitted to later generations.

In tracing the historical antecedents of Guru Nanak J. B. Noss[29] gives pride of place to Kabir, a disciple of Ramananda, "greater than himself, who in turn nourished the soul of the founder of Sikhism." After describing

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

the teaching of Kabir he concludes "Clearly a combination of Hindu and Muslim elements appears in Kabir's teaching" and adds, "Upon this foundation of ethical monotheism Nanak was to rear his own doctrinal position. He was often to appeal back to Kabir as an authority."

Professor Geoffrey Parrinder[31] writes, "The Sikh religion, a militant missionary faith had its antecedents in both Hinduism and Islam. It is a deliberate and recent syncretism." A link with Kabir is not explicitly expressed but the first page of his chapter on the Sikhs is mainly about Kabir!

De Bary[32] refers to the "syncretist religions of Kabir and Guru Nanak" but he does not take the relationship further.

Perhaps A. L. Basham[33] is also non-committal when he says, "Kabir a poor weaver of Varanasi taught the brotherhood of Hindu and Muslim alike in the fatherhood of God, and opposed idolatry and caste practices declaring that God was to be found equally in temple and mosque. Later, Nanak, a teacher in the Punjab taught the same doctrine with even greater force and founded a new faith, that of the Sikhs, designed to incorporate all that was best of Hinduism and Islam."

Ninian Smart[34] is quite explicit. Examining Hindu-Muslim relations during the Mogul period he observes "At the spiritual level there were various attempts to combine the best in the two religions. It was out of such a movement that Sikhism arose. Though not the founder of the Sikh religion, Kabir was one of the important influences in the formation of the new faith. ... Influenced by Kabir and others Nanak, the first Guru and founder of Sikhism as a separate religion leaned rather more to Islam than to Hinduism in his poems and preaching."

An interesting difference is to be found in the following sentence written by Eric Sharpe[35] "Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, was a disciple of Kabir. .. Yet Nanak stood in rather a closer relationship to traditional Hinduism than did Kabir."

Dr. Sharpe would seem to share the position of Louis Renou[36] "The reformed sects", to use Farquhar's phrase, that is the Kabir panthis, the Sikhs and a few others, are on the border line of Hinduism, rather than outside it. The Sikhs who took over some of the features of Kabir's religion consider themselves as a separate sect on political rather than religious grounds.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Nevertheless, they have established a Bible of their own, the Granth, composed on the model of the Rgveda; in inspiration it resembles the Gita, and its general principles are bhakti and divine grace. Both Kabir and the Sikhs are the Spiritual descendants of Ramanand. ... Tradition has it that there was a personal link between Gorakhnath and Kabir or Nanak. Elsewhere,[37] he remarks, "from the fifteenth century onwards, an important feature (of Hinduism) is the syncretism of Kabir and the rise of the 'reformed sects', such as the Sikhs, which seems to have been due to his influence."

K. S. Sen[38] is another scholar who shares this view, "Nanak was clearly influenced by Kabir's teaching. ... Some of the attractive simplicity of Sikhism can be traced to Kabir."

Sikh scholars, not surprisingly, have usually rejected any Kabir-Nanak contact. Two recent studies have been made by Trilochan Singh[39] and Bhai Jodh Singh.[40] To them might be added a biographer of Kabir, Mohan Singh.[41]

Dr. Trilochan Singh poses the question, "Did Guru Nanak meet Kabir?" He concedes that Nanak must have met some prominent successors of Kabir at Benares and acquired the earliest and most authentic writings which eventually were incorporated in the Adi Granth in 1604. He says "It is highly doubtful that he (Nanak) ever met Kabir."

He examined two passages, the first from the Meharban Janam Sakhi, the second from the Handaliya Janam Sakhi. (This Professor McLeod refers to as the Hindal or Bala Janam Sakhi.[42])

The Meharban passage describes the meeting of the two great men at Benares. Each refers to the other as 'God' and Kabir addresses Nanak as 'jagat-guru' or 'saviour of the world'. In reply to Kabir's question "Who is your Guru?" Nanak replies, "I met the Perfect Being, the Supreme Person, the Embodiment of Truth and have received enlightenment from him. It is only a perfect Guru, illumined by God, who can save the world."

In the Handaliya account,[44] which is the one which Westcott and other writers used, it is explicitly stated that Nanak was the disciple of Kabir.

Trilochan Singh attacks the reliability of the two Janam Sakhis. The first was condemned by Guru Arjan. Bhai Gurdas, a leading Sikh of the time and compiler of the Adi Granth under the Guru's direction, described the author, his father and their followers as highway robbers (minas) for the way in which

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

they produced their own corrupt version of the Adi Granth when they set up their own guruship. In the same janam sakhi is an encounter which Nanak had with a number of bhagats, now dead, in their astral bodies. Among these was Kabir. Trilochan Singh regards this as inconsistence and a pointer to Kabir being dead before Nanak began his ministry. Finally, he accepts the date of Kabir's death as 1492 or 1498 CE and notes that Meharban's date for the Benares meeting was 1506.

W. H. McLeod[45] discusses the janam sakhi and regards it as important, then he does add that historical interest was commonly secondary with all writers or compilers and that their main concern was to provide an occasion for an historical discourse. In the present passage this is clearly what matters and Kabir bows at the feet of Nanak who denies being the disciple of any earthly guru.

The Handaliya Janam Sakhi is associated with Bidhi Chand, who left the Sikh movement in the time of the third Guru and formed a break-away sect, using the name of his respected father, Hindal. Professor McLeod[46] shares Sikh distrust of this janam sakhi.

In the Spokesman of 20th July, 1970, (Vol. 19 No. 45) Shri P. Rageshwara Rao wrote an article entitled the 'Ten Commandments of Kabir'. The presentation of this major teaching began with an uncritical account of his life and included the statement that "Among those who acknowledged their indebtedness to him as a spiritual guide are Guru Nanak, Dadu of Ahmedabad and Jag Jiwan Das of Oudh."

In the next Anniversary Number (Vol. 20. No. 1) Bhai Jodh Singh gave his reasons for rejecting the statement of P. R. Rao. First, he argued, it is impossible to regard Kabir as the chela of Ramanand and the guru of Nanak. It would require Kabir to be much more than a centenarian. Secondly, he writes, "In his bani recorded in the Guru Granth Sahib, Guru Nanak does not mention Kabir's name even once among the devotees named by him. Had he been indebted to Kabir as his spiritual guide, this omission would have been impossible. It is considered a sin, according to Sikh teachings, to conceal the name of the Preceptor (Guru)." In support he quoted two passages from the third and fourth Gurus.

"He who conceals his Guru will find no rest. He loses this world and the next." (p. 314).

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

"He who conceals his Guru is not a good man. He loses his interest as well as his capital." (p. 304).

Thirdly, he appeals to the Var of Bhai Gurdas, the oldest biography of Guru Nanak, which clearly says that his knowledge of the Truth was immediate.

"In this realm of Truth, he got the name and humility, the Name which is the most wonderful treasure." (Pauri 24.) For good measure Nanak's own testimony is added:

"I was a workless minstrel and was given this work. An order from his court told me to sing his praises night and day. The True Master called the minstrel to his palace." (P. 150).

Finally, he gives this dialogue of Guru Nanak with the siddhas. They asked "whose disciple are you?"

In reply Nanak answered "Word (sabad) is my Guru. Fixing my mind on its vibrations I am its disciple." (p. 943).

Professor Mohan Singh in his study of Kabir, [47] says that Kabir was dead before Nanak was born, notes that Nanak nowhere mentions Kabir, and also cites a document, part of a work called 'Pran Sangli' which was included in the Bhai Banas copy of the Adi Granth and so can be no later than 1604 in which Kabir acknowledges Nanak as his Guru.

The Sikh refutation, as contained in the writings mentioned above relies heavily upon Kabir being dead before Nanak's ministry began, upon the rejection of documents as spurious, and upon Nanak's own silence.

The first argument can carry little weight. The dating of medieval Indian personalities is notoriously difficult and a much accepted date for the death of Kabir nowadays is 1518 [48] which would permit a meeting in 1506 with a Nanak in his mid-thirties.

As for Nanak's silence, it was apparently usual for members of the Sant tradition not to name their Gurus. [49] Namdev and Kabir are equally silent. It may be that traditions which link Kabir with Ramanand are late and unreliable. [50]

Attitudes towards documents are seldom marked by objectivity. Sikh scholars are notoriously inclined to defend texts and primary sources which support or do not conflict with their views while rejecting those which cause

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

them embarrassment. However, it must be remarked again, that the purpose of janam sakhis is not to record history.

The assertion of a Kabir-Nanak link or the denial of it must have to do with similarity of teachings and the use of the material of one by the other rather than the study of historical evidence.

There are a number of passages in the Guru Granth Sahib attributed to Nanak but showing close verbal correspondence to verses in the Kabir Granthavali. Professor McLeod[51] lists five and adds two which appear under Nanak's name in the Adi Granth but are attributed to Kabir in the Granthavali. We must now turn our attention to these.

Of the first five he points out the epigramatic style and suggests that both teachers may have drawn consciously or unconsciously upon a common fund of aphorisms. Kabir was fond of the epigram and Professor Vaudeville sees him as a person to whom proverbs might be attributed or who was certainly ever-ready to use them.[52]

The two remaining sloks present a greater problem and Professor McLeod, unwilling to conclude that one intentionally tried to pass of the other's work as his own, leaves open the possibility of erroneous attribution and inclusion by the Sikhs between 1539 and 1604 or by the collectors of Kabir's sakhis.

Professor Vaudeville does not comment upon them in her recent volume.

Guru Nanak in all wrote some 900 shabads and the number of Kabir sakhis is variously put between 2,000 and 5,000.[53] An overlap of seven is not considerable and Professor McLeod's tentative explanations appear acceptable.

So much attention has been given to the relationship of Kabir and Nanak because, this is a study of the Guru in Sikhism, and the most obvious statement to make would be that Kabir was Nanak's Guru. evidence?

However, the only real evidence encouraging the acceptance of this popular view is the similarity of ideas. This is a strong reason, the similarities are remarkable, and must be regarded as compelling unless some antecedent common to both men can be discovered. It is to the similarity of Sadhana that we must now turn.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

A Common Denominator?

Kabir and Nanak were teachers with an almost identical message. Both rejected the smarta tradition, the varnashram dharma and worship involving images and sacrifices. In its place they put repetition of the divine name, nama japa. Both spoke of God as creator and could agree that "The Creator alone is real", again each frequently called him "Sat Guru". On the meaning of maya they differed, Kabir often called God "Ram" whereas Nanak rejected any sectarian nomenclature, and he seems to have given more place to God's will (hukam) in his teaching, but nevertheless the two stand closer together than almost any other teachers of the bhakti tradition.

These similarities provide a formidable prima facie case for postulating a relationship. The greater coherence of Nanak's teaching might seem to make the case even stronger for saying that he, the younger man, was the sishya of Kabir.

Rather surprisingly Sikh scholars wishing to deny the relationship have concentrated totally upon the historical evidence, as may be seen from the examples already cited, and this is also true of Professor McLeod though he did examine literary similarities. In Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion [54] he observed that both drew upon a common tradition, but did not argue the case. It is now necessary to see whether some alternative source of inspiration influenced both Guru Nanak and Kabir.

Perhaps this can be discovered through Kabir. Since the Bhakta - Mala of Nabhaji at latest, tradition has always described Kabir as the disciple of Ramanand. Recently, this relationship has been questioned by Professor Vaudeville [55] who is inclined to see it as an example of a sixteenth and seventeenth century tendency to attempt to bring sectarian bhakti movements closer to the smarta tradition. Consequently, the julaha sant, a Muslim by caste if not by practice, was provided with a brahmin Hindu guru. It could be that the same motive made Kabir the guru of Nanak. In both cases, it now seems necessary to question the Ramanand to Ramanuja pedigree and seek an alternative. W. H. McLeod for Nanak and Charlotte Vaudeville in her recent study on Kabir both find this in the Sant/ Nath Yogi traditions of North India.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

The term sant, normally a synonym for sadhu refers here to one who believes in a supreme, non-incarnated God. The phrase nirguna sampradaya, or nirguna school, might be preferred but it has its difficulties. Two of those who may be classed as sants were happy to use sectarian names for God while rejecting the qualities usually ascribed to him by the sect. One, Lalla, also called Lal Ded, or Lallesvari, a woman of the bhangi (scavenger) caste living in Kashmir in the late fourteenth century, was a Saivite yogi able, in her poems, to equate Siva with Vishnu-Krishna (Kesava) or the founder of the Jain religion, Jina. The other was Kabir himself whose usual name for God is "Ram". Were it possible with certainty to accept the solitary hymn of Ramanand found in the Guru Granth Sahib [57] as his own, unaltered work, he too might be included in this tradition rather than regarded as the disciple of Raghavanand and the most famous of medieval Vaisnavites. In the pada, one of the only two fairly reliably attributed to him he does not name his guru ('O gracious guru, I am beholden unto thee'), he rejects exterior religion in the form of pilgrimage and temple worship and the automatic efficacy of vedic knowledge and proclaims the 'all pervasive God', the God 'in my own heart.'

The Saivite Lalla, perhaps Ramanand's contemporary, used similar words to express her search and discovery for God. Her wanderings took her nowhere.

> "I wearied myself seeking for him and searching
> I laboured and strove even beyond my strength.
> I began to look for him and lo, the bolts were on
> his door.
> And even in me, as I was, did longing for him become
> fixed;
> I there, where I was, I gazed upon him."

An earlier Sant Namdev the low caste (calico printer) Marathi is a reputed to have told a Muslim ruler "God is in everything."

A typical passage in the Adi Granth reads:

> "If I should bring flowers and make of them garlands
> to honour this idol, the bee has sucked the flowers,
> God is in the bee.
> Why should I weave a garland for his image?
> God is with us here, God is beyond us there.
> In no place is God not.
> Nama bows to the omnipresent, who filleth the
> whole earth." (p. 485)

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

This emphasis upon the inwardness of this experience of God is found also among the Sufis as the many compositions of Sheikh Farid in the Adi Granth testify.

"Farid, why wander from jungle to jungle, breaking the thorny branches in search of thy Lord?

In thy heart and not in the jungle thy Lord doth reside". (p. 1378).

Then, of course, there was Kabir himself, so similar to Nanak in much of his thinking that 541 of his hymns were included in the Sikh scriptures being given pride of place after Tegh Bahadur before the other non-Sikh contributions.

Professor Vaudeville concludes, "The Saiva Lalla, the Vaisnava Namdev; the Muslim Julaha Kabir stand together at the head of that great family of the saints of North India, they are in fact the first voices of that large, ignorant, depressed and despised mass of men who had no access to brahminical knowledge, who were mostly not admitted to Hindu temples and for whom the logical arguments and sectarian differences remain meaningless. Their spirit of independence probably inherited from the Buddhistic and tantric background, was undoubtedly reinforced by the social upheaval created by the Muslim conquest and also by the support of the more liberal Sufis, among them 'Sheikh Farid' whose sakhis are preserved in the Granth together with Kabir's."[58]

The Sants were 'a loose fellowship of believers in a supreme, non-incarnated God.'[59] To link Lalla, Namdev and Kabir directly would be incorrect but many of the Sants did regard the company of saints, the sangat, as important.

One fellowship of which more is known, largely through passages in the Adi Granth was that of the Siddhas or Nath yogis.

The word siddha means 'the realised'. They are described in the Mahabharata as perfect and blessed spirits[60] but in the context of yoga they are such human beings as have attained liberation.[61]

Traditionally, eighty-four yogis had attained perfection, and therefore immortality, and were living deep in the heart of the Himalayas.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

The Naths were a yogic sect existing at the time of Guru Nanak. Mohan Singh[62] described Nathism as a distinct religion (he called it 'shabadism') and Professor Vaudeville goes some way in supporting the view.[63]

The term 'nath' means sect, strictly speaking. However, it is frequently used as the specific name given to a group acknowledging Gorakh, a twelfth century teacher as their Guru.[64]

Gorakhnath, as he is frequently called, seems to have combined natha-yoga and aspects of Tantric Buddhism in his teachings. Although all yogis are regarded as Saivite the other two influences seem to have predominated.

He rejected the grhastha state of life but did not accept the varnashram dharma, women and men outside the three twice-born castes as well as Muslims being accepted into the panth. He did establish a fellowship or panth and this still exists. Its members were instructed to abstain from sexual intercourse, alcohol and the use of bhang and other drugs which some yogis took to induce higher-consciousness or release hidden powers.

Doctrinally, he believed in a creator God, the perfect brahmin, who instructs the Guru whose instruction (upadesa) and grace (prasada) were essential if his disciples were to obtain moksha.

Two of his verses convey some idea of his teaching and enable a comparison to be made with that of Guru Nanak.

"I am a sacrifice to you, O my unsculptured God. People worship chiselled idols. They know not thy secret. Thou art eternal and from the beginning. I keep my faith in thee.

Thou didst fashion the world but none has created thee.

Ten incarnations of thine are said to have appeared in this world but they were not thee, O God.

Thou art from thyself, thy vision gives enlightenment.

Sayest Gorakh, thou thyself coin the words of the Guru."

In another verse he said,

"Siva is my disciple and Machhindra (his guru) the disciple of a disciple. But since the world would have gone to perdition without a Guru, I

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

became a disciple to continue the tradition."

He identified himself, in a sense with God, the two being one and the two being uniquely eternal - a view later expressed by the Sikh Gurus.

By the fifteenth century the nath panth accepted Gorakh as an Atita ("one who has passed beyond") or a Siddha and with some excuse the words nath and siddha appear synonymous in much of the writing of the Sikh Gurus.

By this time nath emphasis seems to have been upon attaining immortality in the human body through the union of the kundalini with the paramsiva located between the eyes, in the position of Siva's third eye.

Nath beliefs and practices seem to have been far from uniform.

Kirtan or singing of the Name seems to have preoccupied some whereas others emphasised unvoiced meditation. Some were influenced by the sakta tradition of Saivism against the teachings of Gorakh so that Kabir felt compelled to say "A pig is better than a sakta for it keeps the village clean." (Granthvalli 21 [12]).

Sacrifice (bali), which would have necessitated taking life and being contaminated with blood may have been practised by some yogis. In contrast both Kabir and Nanak frequently spoke of themselves as 'sacrifices', using precisely the same term and seeing the life of devotion, both spiritual and moral as a sacrifice to God and to man.

Besides the search for moksha which characterised all Indian philosophy and sectarianism the Naths and people like Nanak also saw the experience of God as something inward, though the sants give much greater place to spontaneity (parica), or direct experience, the vision of God given by his grace rather than attainment through yogic practices. Nevertheless, they can speak of postures (asanas) such as humility, contentment and self-control. The techniques (sadhana) were not essentially different, both were to do with inwardness, though one said that ochre robes, ashes and the jungle were necessary too and the other said God could be found in a man's own home. 'Sahaj', non-conditionment, one attribute of which was a state of fearlessness (abhai or anabhai) was a nath term frequently used by Nanak, but for him realised through the Guru. In Nath practice mantras especially

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

bija mantra, (seed-mantra) which might be 'Gorakh' or 'Nam' was used to awaken experiences; Nanak's use of 'Nam' might be regarded as similar but its purpose was to aid devotion or recollection (simran) not to stimulate or develop power in any quasi-magical way. The Mool Mantra is more a credal statement than a mantra in the tantric sense.

Dr. Sher Singh,[66] thirty years ago wrote, "I am inclined to say that the influence of Siddhism upon Sikhism has been greatest of all the sects of India" though he noted the considerable differences and the fact that the two are different schools. "On the practical side, however," he says, "the influence of the Yogis cannot be denied and Sikhism owes to them the modifications which Nanak conceived from his close touch with the Siddhas of his time."[67]

More recently Professor McLeod, and now Professor Vaudeville for Kabir have confirmed this view. The latter in a study which accepts this conclusion of Professor McLeod that Kabir and Nanak are to be regarded as independent of one another,[68] has seen the Nath sect as important in the development of Kabir's thought. Here, as Professor McLeod had already suggested, is the probable Nanak-Kabir link, a common indebtedness to the sant tradition and to the siddhas in particular.

It would be unsatisfactory to end this section without pointing out the ways in which Guru Nanak's teaching differed from that of the naths.

Most notably, he rejected their adoption of the sannyasin way of life accompanied by the uniform of ear-rings, begging bowl and staff. If God is within and revealed by his grace, he argued, he may be found at home, one need not go to the forest to find him. Repeatedly Nanak replaced the Yogi's accoutrements with moral qualities and praised the grhastha way of life.[69]

Secondly he created a grhastha community unlike the nath fellowship. He composed hymns and encouraged the singing of kirtan which was family worship at dawn and when the day's work was done.

In fact, against Professor Sher Singh it may be argued that the siddha practices were precisely what Guru Nanak rejected, and that the Kesha, one of Guru Gobind Singh's five K's, the long hair might even be seen as a reaction against the head-shaving of siddha initiates. (The references to the yogis persists throughout the writings of the Gurus). What Nanak accepted from the

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

naths was their essential ideas not their practices.

In conclusion one must see Guru Nanak alongside Kabir as the heir of a great North Indian heritage, Vaisnavite and Saivite, and one which would not have been the same had it not been for Muslim penetration and especially the safi influence.

This heritage is tacitly or clearly acknowledged in the Guru Granth Sahib which contains hymns of Namdev and Sheikh Farid and which, in various places, but especially in Nanak's composition Siddha Gosht, shows the impact of nath thought. Without a knowledge of Islam one could understand the teachings of Nanak unhindered, though one would be at a loss to account for the development of the Sikh movement if one were ignorant of Mogul history. On the other hand an awareness of the Hindu mythology, of the Samkhya, system and yogic techniques and teachings, especially in their Siddha form is essential to understanding the teachings of the Gurus.

Sometime after Nanak the poet Tulsi Das wrote, "in this Dark Age with Sakhis, sabdas and dohas, with tales and stories these devotees expound devotion which scorning the Vedas and Puranas [70] they leave the path of devotion to Hari and overcome by delusion they dream up many new paths." These words were directed at Kabir and Nanak and their successors. They show how a smarta could regard this "Light of this Dark Age", as Nanak's followers regarded him. As far as Sikhism was concerned the novelty of the path lay in the logical coherence of Nanak's teaching, an end result of a process going back far into Indian religion, and in the peculiar and unique form which the concept of guruship was to take.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

The Antecedents of Sikhism.

Footnotes to Chapter One.

1. The Janam Sakhis. These, with the Var of Bhai Gurdas, a contemporary of the fifth Guru, Arjan, constitute the main (and almost total) information which is available to the biographer of Guru Nanak. The most important are those of four traditions, the Bala, Bhai Mani Singh, Puratan and Meherban. These are discussed in McLeod, 1968, Chapter 2. Sikh scholars do not necessarily agree with his findings and an alternative viewpoint is expressed by Dr. Trilochan Singh's Guru Nanak, Appendix II, p. 492. It seems clear, however, that biographical concern was not uppermost in the minds of the authors or compilers and the Janam sakhis must be regarded warily as historical sources. Another discussion of the Janam sakhis resulting from Professor McLeod's book may be found in Parkh (1969 issue 1), the punjabi language and literature research bulletin of Chandigarh University. The relevant article is by Gurmukh Nichal Singh.

2. A. G. p. 436. "Men have grown weary of contemplation, penance and self discipline. They obtain him (God) not through hatha-joga. Nanak, contentment (sahaj) is through meeting the Life of the World, the Lord. The True Guru imparts this understanding." (boj, bujaiie, cf, sanskrit bija, seed).

A. G. p. 903 contains a number of phrases. "The six-ringed abbey of the human body", a reference to the six chakras or parts of the body important in hatha-yogic practices. "Thou makest ear-rings of glass", an allusion to the Kanphat sect. "Nine-treasures", the nine body openings, perhaps also the nine forms of wealth, including secret-knowledge which it was thought yogic practice could attain. There are also more common place comments upon smearing ash upon the body, dressing in ochre-robes and carrying begging bowls.

A. G. p. 223. "The yogi meditates on the fearless and pure Lord. Night and day he remains awake and embraces affection (lav cf. sanskrit laya 'merging') for the True Name. Such a yogi is pleasing

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

2. to my mind. The snare of death he burns with the Lord's fire. He sheds the fear of old age and death and stills his ego." Release from fear, especially of death, and the eagerness to achieve immortality through coolness and imitation of the Siddhas, the Perfect or Pure Ones were yogic aims.
Other passages of note are: A. G. p. 45, 54, 208, 360, 436, 809, 1042 and 1232, and the hymn Siddha Gosht pp. 938 - 946. See also Sohan Singh 1959, pp. 78, J. S. Grewal, 1969, pp. 215 - 226, S. R. Sharda Parkh 1969 issue 1. p. 73, Kohli 1966, p. 81 - 84.
3. A. G. p. 930. cf. also the composition Thitti p. 839 and the Japji A. G. p. 1.
4. pauri 30. A. G. p. 6.
5 & 6. See especially Taran Singh 1970, Lecture 4 by Jodh Singh.
7. A. G. p. 223. "Whom should I call the second when there is none else? Amongst all is contained that one pure Lord. ... The Lord's will alone pervades all the worlds; all creation is born of him alone." cf. pp. 154, 599, 1291. Almost every page alludes to God, the One, the Creator, acting of his own volition.
8. Manu-Smrti. 1. 96 - 118.
9. Sikh Ethics, ch. 6. Allchin p. 49. Ramanand and Nanak are not strictly contemporary but belong to the same century.
10. Nihal Singh, 1969. chapter 7.
11. op. cit. p. 119.
12. Man's Religions. J. B. Noss. The sub-title is retained in the 4th ed. 1974.
13. Worship in the World's Religions, Faber 1961, p. 73.
14. Sources of Indian Tradition. 1958. p. 370.
15. Many Janam Sakhi accounts e. g., Nanak and Malik Bhago, (p. 45) Nanak at Hardwar, (p. 51), his encounter with Mian Mitha, (p. 123) his visit to Mecca (p. 174). Page references are to Macauliffe. Vol. 1. 1963. Also A. G. 140, 141, 556, 636, 903, 951, 952 and many others. Not all are criticial of Islam or Hinduism. A. G. p. 141 describes the true Muslim, humble, a worshipper of the Creator, one who submits heartily to the Lord's will, and is merciful to all sentient beings.
16. Rab, Khuda, Allah. See Guru Nanak in History. J. S. Grewal. p. 224 - 231

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

17. See chapter 2, section 2.
18. Svetasvatara Upanishad. 3.7.
19. " " 6.16.
20. " " 2, 20, 21.
21. " " 3, 20.
22. " " 6. 23.
23. Chandogya Upanishad. 3.14.3; Katha Upanishad 2.20.
24. Katha Upanishad. 2.20, 23.
25. Gitabasya Lectures 4 and 15.
26. " Lecture 18.
27. Vaudeville, 1974, Ch. 4. Kabir was a Julaha, a weaver. This caste was regarded as Muslim and this must have been his official religion whether he was circumcised or not. (p. 89).
28. p. 137. section 91.
29. J. B. Noss, 1963.
30. J. B. Noss, 1963, p. 312.
31. E. G. Parrinder 1961, p. 73.
32. De Bary, 1958, p. 370.
33. A. L Basham, 1970, p. 481.
34. Smart, 1972, p. 177.
35. Hinnells and Sharpe, 1972, p. 75.
36. Renou 1968, p. 90.
37. " p. 104.
38. Sen, 1961, p. 99.
39. Guru Nanak, Delhi, 1969.
40. Spokesman Weekly, Anniversary Number, 1970.
41. Kabir and the Bhagti Movement, Lahore, 1934.
42. McLeod, 1968, p. 23. footnote 3.
43. The dialogue reads as follows: (Trilochan Singh, 1969, p. 143).
"Kabir: Good God, please be seated. I am not so great that a man of your eminence should stand up to receive me.
Nanak: When a God comes how can one remain seated.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

43. Kabir: No. No. You are a jagat-guru and I am your slave.
Nanak: Blessed am I that I have met you.
Kabir: You have been sent to save the world, O Nanak.
Nanak: I am not worried about the world. All I wish is that I may not forget God.
Kabir: Yet the world will acknowledge you as a supreme prophet.
Nanak: O Kabir, you serve God. Your deeds are truthful. Your mind is one with Pure Being. (niranjan).
Kabir: From whom did you receive the Divine Light? Who is your Guru?
Nanak: I met the Perfect Being, the Supreme Person, the Embodiment of Truth, and have received enlightenment from him. It is only a Perfect Guru, illumined by God, who can save the world.

44. The Handalija account or Hindali janam sakhi is a version of the Bala tradition (McLeod 1968, p. 86). It was produced by descendants of Handal, a famous and respected disciple of Guru Amar Das in their bid for power during and after the reign of Guru Arjan. They certainly persisted into the eighteenth century (Trilochan Singh p. 146). Apparently one of their methods was to take the tradition ascribed to Nanak's companion Bala and insert passages in which the Guru acknowledged Kabir as his superior and himself as a lost sinner. The 'evidence' of such a reliable witness seems to have confused a number of Sikhs and produced a real threat to the community. See further chapter 3 of this present study and Macauliffe 1963, volume 2, pp. lxxx and lxxxi.

45. McLeod, 1968. p. 18-33 passim.

46. ibid. p. 23.

47. Mohan Singh, 1934, p. 56.

48. Vaudeville, 1974, pp. 38 and 39, refuses to commit herself. She quotes a number of other scholars and indicates the general readiness of western writers to accept the 1518 date usually found in Kabir-panth literature and Hindu tradition. So Renou 1963, p. 188, McLeod 1968, p. 155, Ling 1968, p. 325; Smart 1972, p. 117; Sharpe (Hinnells and Sharpe, 1972) p. 72. Sen 1971, p. 99 and Zaehner 1962, offer no dates.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

49. Vaudeville, 1974, p. 117.

50. Vaudeville, 1974. Chapter 4, section 4 esp. p. 113.

51. Guru Nanak and Kabir, Proceedings of the Punjab History Conference, 1965, pp. 87 - 92.

52. Vaudeville, 1974, p. 72, footnote 2, cf. p. 53.

53. Kabir and His Followers, F. E Keay.

54. McLeod, 1968, p.

55. Vaudeville, 1974, Chapter 4, section 4. So too Bhandarkar, Vaisnavism, Saivism and Minor Religious Systems according to Trilochan Singh, 1969, p. 1968, footnote 32.

56. McLeod 1968, and Vaudeville 1974, working independently, the one on Guru Nanak and the other on Kabir, both conclude that the subjects of their studies were influenced more than anything else by the Sant/Nath-Yoga traditions.

57. A.G. p. 1195. Vaudeville, 1974, pp. 111 and 112.

58. Vaudeville, 1974, p. 110.

59. McLeod, 1968, p. 245.

60. 6.254.

61. Hindu Polytheism, A. Danielou. p. 303.

62. Kabir, His Biography. p. 68.

63. Vaudeville, 1974, p. 139.

64. So Nanak, Siddha Gosht and Kabir, In Praise of the Saints, Sakhi 41. More recently Indian Sadhus, G. S. Ghurye, McLeod 1968, Vaudeville, 1974.

65. Vaudeville 1974, Chapter 4. p. 85 following. A tradition existed that Gorath achieved immortality. By following a method similar to that of tantric yoga (pp. 131 - 135) his followers believed they could reach the same goal.

66. Sher Singh 1944, p. 127.

67. Sher Singh 1944, p. 128.

68. Vaudeville 1974, p. 29, footnote 1, quoting McLeod 1968, p. 85-86.

69. e.g. A.G. p. 3. Japji pauri 30, cf. Siddha Gosht. A.G. p. 938 following.

70. Dehavalli 554 and 555 quoted Allchin p. 49.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Chapter Two.

The Concept of Guru in the Teachings of Guru Nanak.

Introduction. The Guru's teachings fall into four divisions. He made a number of references to himself as a human being which contrast interestingly with some of the claims made for him by his followers [1] or by the devotees of other gurus [2] some of whom are living today.

Clearly more important than himself was the one Nanak called the Sat Guru, God. In the Mool Mantra he encapsulated his teaching about the Divine Being and this short passage is one which must be considered by itself though it will be referred to later, many times. Then there is the Japji, a shabad of uncertain date but regarded as so important by Sikhs that frequently they describe the rest of Nanak's hymns as nothing more than a commentary upon it. The final division will comprise an examination of sections from these other banis. Not all the relevant verses will be quoted for many repeat the same idea. The examination will be confined to those which are distinctive and which shed light upon the particular issue under consideration, Guru Nanak's concept of guruship.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

(a) Nanak's use of the term Guru as applied to himself.

The one source used for this study will be the hymns of Guru Nanak which are contained in the Guru Granth Sahib. Janam Sakhi evidence is not contemporary and it is not possible to accept with complete certainty words accredited to him which are found in them. Though a portrait of Nanak may be obtained, one which shows his wit, wisdom, compassion and humility yet it is from his 'hymns' his poetical compositions, that his views of himself as guru and of God as Sat Guru are to be obtained. ?

For the westerner nowadays the word guru conjures up visions of flamboyance and raises doubt and distrust. For those who have visited a gurdwara it may immediately evoke a picture of the martial Guru Gobind Singh uniformed, armed, hawk in hand, seated on a throne or on his war horse. Therefore, it might be salutary to begin by examining Nanak's views of himself as guru. ?

He was well aware of the existence of what he called 'blind guides' who for money or fame gave instruction and gathered a following though they possessed no knowledge of the truth. So he said:

> "One without divine knowledge sings sermons. The hungry mullah turns his own home into a mosque. Becoming an idle do-nothing he has his ears pierced. Another embracing mendicancy loses his caste. Fall not ever at the feet of him who calls himself a guru and a pir and goes begging. He who eats what he earns through honest labour and from his hands gives some in charity; he alone, O Nanak, knows the true way of life." (p. 1245)

For Nanak there was no place for spiritual pride. All wisdom came from God.

> "I am the hand maiden of my Lord. I have grasped the feet of my Lord, the life of the world who has killed and finished my self-conceit (haumai). The omnipresent embodiment of supreme light and darling supreme Lord is my very life." (p. 1197)

He nowhere shows his humility and dependence more than in this description of his calling, which will be described in detail later.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

"Me, the bard out of work, the Lord has applied to his service. In the very beginning he gave me the order to sing his praises night and day. The master summoned the minstrel to his true court.

... By singing the Guru's hymn, I, the minstrel spread the Lord's glory." (p. 150).

In another poem he described himself as

"the lord's bard of low birth"

or a slave and less than a slave,

"I am thy slave and the dust of the feet of thy servants". (p. 721)

though one has seen the dust which a holy man has trodden on touched to the forehead by a devotee as he entered the gurdwara.

There is no place for the sakti principle in Sikhism, God is the one creator free from duality; nevertheless, Nanak was willing to use metaphors of marriage to describe his relationship with God, though not, it would seem too erotic, imagery of Krishna bhakti.[3]

"Were I to become a cuckoo and live in a mango tree, I would still meditate on my Master's name. I would then easily meet my spouse whose sight and beauty is unsurpassed.

... My husband dwells on this side and on that, I would meet him by stretching out my hands." (p. 157)

In more prosaic terms he expressed this relationship in the same composition;

"The master's mandate cannot be known, he grants greatness to any he likes. I am ever a sacrifice unto my master who is obtained through the Guru's grace. I am the retail-dealer of my all-pervading Lord. Thy name is my merchandise and trade." (p. 157).

On page 991 are similar words.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

"I am a purchased servant and slave (das) of thine, O Lord, and I go by the name of Lucky. In exchange for thy gurbani, O Lord, I have sold myself at the shop and withsoever thou hast yoked me I am yoked".

No one, as yet, seems to have diagnosed Nanak as epileptic in the way that they have Ezekiel, St. Paul or Muhammad. Some contemporaries did, however, suggest he was crazy.

"Some say poor Nanak is a sprite, some say that he has a demon and some call him a man. Ignorant Nanak has become mad after his Lord.

Without God I know not another. Then alone man is insane if he goes mad with fear of God and recognises none other than the one lord.

Then alone he is known as insane, if he performs the one Lord's service and realises his lord's command. In what else is there wisdom?

Then alone one is deemed insane when he cherishes the love for the one lord and knows himself bad and the rest if the world as good." (p. 991)

Perhaps no words sum up his opinion of himself better than these,

"O Lord, thy fear is my hemp, and my mind is the leather pouch. I have become an intoxicated hermit. My hands are the cup and I am hungry for your vision, O God. Day by day I beg at thy door. ... Bless thou me, thine door's beggar, with alms, O Lord. (p. 721)

He realises his absolute dependence on God, not to the point of being neurotic; with Nanak one always feels oneself in the presence of a well-integrated man, but he was perfectly certain that all he was and possessed came from God and like many another saint he had his times of spiritual drought,

"Thou appearest not unto me, though thou abidest with all. How can the thirst of me, the thirsty, abate when there is a screen between the tank and me? (p. 557)

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

A number of the Guru's verses pronounce upon the contemporary political situation, especially upon the decadence of North Indian society against which Babur would soon lead a Mogul invasion-force from Kabul. On one occasion, before making this prophetic utterance of judgement, Nanak declared,

> "As the word of the Lord came to me,
> so do I utter". (p. 722)

Beggar at God's door, slave, madman, all these names he was willing to attribute to himself or accept from other people's lips, but of one thing he was certain in his mind, namely that he was a man summoned by God to his court and given the word of liberation. This task or privilege was his by the grace of God and no other explanation could be offered to account for it. Recognition of this divine origin of his words and nothing else made men Sikhs and Nanak their Guru.

The separation of Nanak's teaching about the human Guru and the Sat Guru, as he often names God, is difficult. Some passages are ambiguous, the reference could be to a human Guru - who need not be Nanak - or to God. For example,

> "O Nanak, I am ever a sacrifice unto the
> Guru who himself beholds and causes
> others to behold God." (p. 18)

In its context the passage could refer to God himself for a few lines earlier these words occur.

> "By casting his gracious glance God washes
> off man's filth and in his very home he comes
> to realise the Lord's presence.
> Without the Guru pollution is not removed and
> without God how can there be a home-coming?
> Having remounced other hopes we ought to
> meditate upon the Name alone."

- then follow the words of the first quotation.

Many verses in the hymns of Nanak link together with Guru, God and the Name in a way which suggests that they are to be regarded as synonymous. The task of separation is made even more difficult by the fact that though

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

theologically the ten Gurus and God are regarded as distinct, and the previous section might be remembered at this point, the contents of the Guru Granth Sahib are poetry, not systematic theology and licence is frequently exercised. This point will become more apparent when the post-Nanak writings are examined. Furthermore, ultimately God and man become one -

> "When by the Guru's teaching the mortal is filled with divine fear he obtains understanding and honour welcomes him. O Nanak! the true king of himself then blends man with his own self." (p. 18)

Even more explicitly,

> "By the Guru's instruction Nanak is absorbed in the Lord." (p. 221)

In the complete merging of the disciple and the Lord one is very close to the Hindu view of samadhi.

The secret of life is one which few have perceived. It is that life is ultimately a unity. The multiplicity of beings is apparent but the result of false knowledge.

> "The highest of the high the Lord is said to be.
> He cannot be perceived by anyone.
> Wheresoever I see, I see thee alone! The
> true Guru has caused me to behold thee.
> Nanak, by divine insight this mortal easily
> (sahaj) realised the Lord's light within all.! (p. 55)

The human Guru has been given this awareness. It is his privilege to pass it on.

> "The one soul wanders through the three worlds.
> If this mortal understands and perceives one God
> he is then blessed with honour.
> He who gathers divine wisdom and meditation,
> he abides in a state of evenness.
> Some rare one attains to the one Lord by the
> Guru's grace. He whom the Lord has given
> through his grace alone obtains peace. He then
> utters and preaches the true name through the
> Guru.
> The Lord's light illumines the ocean and the earth.
> The great cherisher of the world is contained in
> the three worlds.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

"When such divine comprehension wells up then God gives a vision [4] of himself and mercifully enters the mortal's own house. Descending low the rain is incessantly falling. The sublime Gurbani embellishes the mortal.
He who knows the secret of this one God is himself the creator and himself the luminous Lord." (p. 930)

"As a consequence of this divinely given insight the one who has no master (anathi) is made patron (nath) of all. (p. 224).

These two passages express the same view which Nanak gave in replying to the question of the naths who asked him

"Who is your Guru, of whom art thou the disciple?"

In reply he said

"The Lord is my Guru, whose meditation, I, his disciple, I greatly love. ..... all ages through God, the cherisher of the world is my Guru. Such is the unique Lord, by meditating on whose divine discourse (sabdu), the man crosses the world ocean. (p. 943)

In the first place the Guru is a receiver and therefore a master. He is as a goad to an elephant, exercising discipline and control.

"The mind is an elephant in the body forest. The Guru is the goad. When the mark of the true Name is made on the elephant, it obtains honour in the King's court".

This is an interesting figure of speech. It is the mind which is the Guru's concern. Significantly Nanak confines his references to darshan, to God himself. The human Guru's task is to provide instruction and understandingly, through this comes a vision of the Sat Guru, God.

"The carefree Lord is unweighable and his real worth is known through the Guru's instruction. ...
.. O my soul, by understanding thy ownself, and meditating on God, through the Guru, thou shalt be released." (p. 20).
"When the Guru instructs understanding is obtained." (p. 224),
"by singing his hymns egoism is overcome" (p. 226)
"and so the satisfied soul becomes one with the Lord" (p. 222)
Playing on nath terminology Nanak is thus able to say
"Through the Guru the Lord is easily (sahaj) discerned", or alternatively translated "Through the Guru, the Lord, the unconditioned, is discerned." (p. 222).

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

The world ocean is crossed by the gurbani, the Guru's instruction. This is the only way, "without the Guru self-conceit cannot be effaced. (p. 225). In a long passage on this and the preceding page Nanak carried this argument into the world of Indian mythology, something for which he had little sympathy. One purpose of this excursion was that of ridiculing the gods and heroes. So, bereft of the Guru's counsel, Bal was forced to go to the underworld Daryodhna lost his honour, Janmeja could find no peace, Kansa, Kes and Chandur were also lost. Brahma indulged in egotism and only when faced with the loss of the Vedas did he remember the Lord. Ravana's error lay in forgetting the Lord, indulging in ego and being without the Guru's love. Later bards could say of God in the Kaliyug 'you are called Nanak, Angad, Amar Das' (p. 1390). Though the Gurus carefully avoided being associated with Vaisnavite beliefs in avatars there were popular ideas that what the avatars were to the past the Gurus were to the present age, but witnesses to the word and to the primal Lord, God himself being formless.

> "Only through the Guru may the mind find rest. Without him the mammon worshipper's mind is like a mad elephant wandering distractedly through the forest of worldly love. The pressure of death prompts it to go here and there until it hears the Guru's word." (p. 415).

Other teachers, lacking the Guru, can give no help. Their search for wealth may arouse suspicion but their real error lies in teaching and preaching without a message,

> "The brahmins read books but understand not their meaning. They instruct others and walk away. Themselves they trade in wealth. They wander about the world talking falsehood, while they who abide by the name are the best.
> Many are the Pandits and astrologers who deliberate over the Vedas. They glorify disputes and strifes and in controversies they continue coming and going. Without the Guru they cannot be absolved of their actions however much they may tell, hear, preach and expound.
> All call themselves virtuous, but I possess no virtue" (p. 56.)

Any status the Guru may have came not from birth, as with the brahmins whom Nanak criticised but from the word which he uttered.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

(b) God as Sat Guru in the Teachings of Guru Nanak.

(1) The Mool Mantra.

The experience which is the keystone of Nanak's guruship, which in his own words gave employment to an out of work bard was that which took place when he went to take his normal morning ablutions in the river Bein near Sultanpur. For three days he could not be found even though the Nawab Daulat Khan ordered the river to be dragged and Mardana and other friends and relatives searched the banks and the forest. When Nanak did re-appear he remained silent for some time, for so long that an injury was feared, then, at last he spoke saying [5] "There is neither Hindu nor Mussulman so whose path shall I follow? I shall follow God's path. God is neither Hindu nor Mussulman and the path which I follow is God's."

According to the Puratan Janam Sakhi Nanak eventually revealed that messengers of God had come and had taken him to the divine court. There he was given a cup of nectar (amrit), and commanded "Nanak, this is the cup of My Name (Nam). Drink it." This he did, after which he was charged to go into the world and preach the divine name.

Sikh tradition is united in affirming that the first poetic utterance of Guru Nanak after the experience described above was the verse which they call the Mool Mantra. It is a terse theological statement, the basic (so 'mool' which means 'basic') credal declaration of Sikhism. In the Guru Granth Sahib the mantra is given pride of place before the Japji of Guru Nanak, each section of the scripture begins with it, as do many individual hymns and it is formally taught to each initiate at the amrit ceremony.

Taking to heart the caveat of Professor McLeod [6] that the Mool Mantra is open to misinterpretation unless it is read in conjunction with other writings of Guru Nanak, nevertheless the statement does make a number of important assertions and points the direction for further study.

The verse reads "Ik oankar sat namu karta purukh nirbhau nirvair akal murit ajuni saibhan gur prasadi."

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

There is no uniformity among Sikh scholars when it comes to rendering this into English [7] and the following is itself a personal choice drawing upon a number of sources.

There is one God	Ik oankar
Eternal truth is his name	sat namu
Creator of all things and the all-pervasive spirit,	karta purukh
Fearless and without hatred,	nirbhau nirvair
Timeless and formless,	akal murit
Beyond birth and death	ajuni
Self-illumined (or enlightened)	saibhan
By the grace of the Guru made known (to men)	gur prasadi

Ik oankar is found on the canopy which acts as a chattri to the sacred book in the Gurdwara. One is immediately reminded of the symbol (Om) which may be seen in a similar position in Hindu temples though here the canopy shades the picture or statues of the deities. The coincidence is intentional for as Om is to the Hindu Ik oankar is to the Sikh.

God is one. Immediately one is referred to the world of Hindu philosophy, to thoughts of Om and the 'tat ekam' of the Rig Veda 1.164.46. As the mantra develops 'Om' becomes personalised.

Om or aum is the primal word, the causal word, 'the one eternal syllable of which all that exists is but the development.' [8] It is the 'Immensity'. It may be said to represent the revolving, cohesive and disintegrating tendencies in life, and hence to Brahman, Vishna and Siva. (Dattatreya Tantra Samhita 569). It is the seed of this immensity (the brahma - bija) or the brahma - vidya mantra which leads to the attainment of supreme reality. Of Om the Katha Upanishad states, 'That which the Vedas declare, that which all austerities utter, that desiring which they lead the life of Brahma - carya, that word I tell thee briefly, that is Om. That word is even Brahman, the Supreme.' [9]

The Commissioner of Nanak is Om and this is ik, one. Nanak does not share the view of the Mandgala Purana 'that the nature of illusion (maya) is represented by the number one.' (In fact maya in Sikh thought is delusion rather than illusion, that which is the opposite to truth in terms of knowledge or insight). It may be that there is an implied rejection of zero, the void, sunya, an important Buddhist idea which may have had a place in the tantric-influenced nath teachings of which he was aware. More precisely, as one sees elsewhere in the mantra this is a rejection of a dualistic view of the universal order for the one is eternal and

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary

also a creator. By implication systems like that of Kapila are rejected though if the Samkhya of the Gita is as described by A. J. Bahm (The Bhagavad Gita p. 161) it may be claimed that there is some sympathy between it and the concepts underlying the mool mantra. However, this is not to suggest that there is evidence of a direct link.

Against dualism Nanak's concept of God is monotheistic and he is the all-pervading source of life, karta purukh. One is reminded of a verse from the Svetasvatara Upanishad:

> "You are the blue-fly and the red-eyed parrot,
> the cloud pregnant with lighting.
> You are the seasons and the seas,
> the beginningless, the abiding Lord
> from whom the spheres are born" (4.4).

The Mool Mantra's Guru is the ultimate source of Being. In mythology Siva, Vishnu and even Brahma are often secondary causers or agents of some Primal Being. In Hindu practice so may the guru be. Perhaps as in the Mundaka Upanishad[11] the guru, (Angiras) may be able to trace his knowledge back through a number of generations to Brahma but ultimately the guru himself is one who passes on brahma vidya, rather than its source. The Guru of the Mool Mantra is the unique, timeless, eternal active divinity without a second. So true is this that mukti in Sikh thought is being absorbed completely into God. It is the sayujya or Samadhi of yoga. No distinction between God and the liberated being remains.

The concept of avatar is important in Indian religion, especially Vaisnavite forms of bhakti. In the Mool Mantra the belief is rejected; God is formless (murit) and beyond both birth and death, (ajuni). How this position is sustained in Sikhism will have to be examined later, especially as Professor Parrinder in his book Avatar and Incarnation has produced evidence, mainly from the writings of the tenth Guru, which appear to contradict it.[12]

In the great theophany which comprises the eleventh chapter of the Gita[13] hosts of gods, rishis and the worlds themselves shudder in terror as they behold the fully revealed Vishnu. Nirbhau and Nirvair, however, characterise the God of Nanak. He is fearless and without hatred. In one of his hymns set to the musical rag Asa Nanak says, having referred to Siddhis, Buddhas and Naths,

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

'Fear of the Lord is the inborn attribute of all creation. The formless one, the true, is alone without fear.' Beyond the literal meaning there is a desire to express the constancy and equanimity of God. As the fifth Guru put it, 'My Lord is kind and always kind.'

To complete and confirm what has already been stated this Being, the Adi-Guru[16] is self-illumined and saibhan. His enlightenment is self-generated for he is the source of wisdom and knowledge as well as life. As such he cannot be known through mantras which if repeated properly and in the appropriate conditions induce knowledge or wisdom, his power may not be obtained by the practice of yogic austerities, his bliss may not be discerned or shared by meditation. The self-illumined may be known only as he chooses to reveal himself, only by his grace (gur prasadi), by the grace of the Guru, he is made known to men. There is debate among Sikhs over the meaning of the word Guru in this phrase. Is the 'Guru' here Nanak or God himself?

S. S. Kohli in his important study of the Guru Granth Sahib acknowledges that the word may be used of God or of the human guru but seems to suggest that in the mool mantra, about which he is writing, the reference is to the latter.

"Almighty God, whose qualities have been mentioned above can only be realised by the Grace of the True Guru (Gurprasad). The term Guru in Adi Granth means the Divine Teacher. God himself is described as Adi Guru and Jugad Guru, i.e. God is the Divine Teacher is the beginning and the Primal Age. The existence of Guru is essential in all fields of work, therefore, it was necessary that for the spiritual advancement of the human beings, there must be some Being with full realisation of God. This Guru-cult is very old in Indian thought."[17]

The evidence which may remove the ambiguity from this phrase (unless it is intentionally ambiguous) must be sought outside the Mool Mantra, in the other writings of Nanak in which he refers to God and to his own personality and mission. However, bearing in mind the way in which not only Nanak but his successors emphasised their ordinary humanity on the one hand and the importance of the bani on the other it is a little surprising to discover a leading Sikh scholar suggesting, by implication, that at any point in the Mool Mantra Nanak is alluding to himself.

When he spoke of his Guru, God, he perceived one whom to know renders

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

mythology inadequate for however sophisticated the myths create visual images and place God within the limiting context of space and time. This Being is known by name, and of course one remembers here that knowledge of the name of the deity is important and potent in many religious traditions, but the name Namu is sati, again deflecting thought from sectarian presuppositions. Ultimately the Mool Mantra seems intended to provide an impression of pure being, unique and responsible for the whole of life, formless and yet creative, self-revealing and personal.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

(2) The Concept of Guru as found in the Japji of Guru Nanak.

Both S. S. Kohli and Harnam Singh use the word 'epitome' when referring to this hymn, the morning prayer of the Sikhs. The former describes it as the 'epitome of the Adi Granth', [18] the latter goes further affirming that 'from the days of the Guru, the Japji has been considered to be an epitome of all Sikh philosophy.' [19] In recognition of its importance, Guru Arjan gave the composition pride of place and pre-eminence in the Adi Granth and when assigning the various hymns to the 31 rag-divisions into which the book is divided left this one separate and alone. [20] The distinctiveness with which Sikhs regard the Japji is pleaded as reason enough for giving it separate attention here.

The date of the hymn is important even though one may agree with Parkash Singh [21] when he argues that compositions like it and the Gita were never dated for their doctrines are timeless. There is a need to know whether this is the product of the Guru's mature spiritual thought or not? If it were shown to be early it could hardly be descriped as the 'epitome' of his teaching. Scholars agree that the japji is to be placed later in Nanak's career, which is fortunately the one assurance which is required. Otherwise unanimity is lacking; one writer suggests Baghdad [22] (1518 - 1521), most Kartarpur sometime after 1521 when the fifty-two year old Guru settled down as a farmer and leader of the young Sikh community. Though Parkash Singh concludes that it was not composed at one particular time [24] he also accepts the view that 'the final form of this long hymn was given at Kartarpur.'

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Placed at the beginning of the Guru Granth Sahib, immediately after the Mool Mantra, the 'morning prayer' of the Sikhs is regarded both as the finest poetry and noblest spiritual utterance of Guru Nanak. It is almost alone in not being set to any musical rag and it has attracted the attention of more commentators than any other composition of the ten Gurus. Therefore, it seems proper to treat it, like the Mool Mantra, separately from the other hymns of Guru Nanak.

The Japji, which means recitation or repetition, is regarded as the mature thought of Guru Nanak. It comprises 38 pauris (lit. steps) by which the reader ascends to God-realisation. It offers a solution to the problem of human existence and describes the Sikh way of reaching God. 'The Japji focuses the attention of the reader upon the Divine Personality, the One Supreme Spirit, the One Source of Life and Light, the One Permanent Being, the Creator' (Nichal Singh in his forward to the translation made by Puran Singh).

The subject of the poem is God, the Guru of Nanak, the Sat Guru. However, the hymn does not begin with praise or with description of the Lord, instead it declares that God may be known through his will (hukam).

In Hindu thought God-consciousness may be attained in a variety of ways. Guru Nanak ennumerates and rejects four of them, cleanliness (i.e. the avoidance of pollution), meditation, hunger, (fasting) and asceticism.

The word hukam has no simple meaning in the context of Sikh thought. In everyday language it can mean arrangement or plan - "hukam karo ji?" "What's the plan/programme?" In the hymns of Guru Nanak it expresses a variety of ideas.

God creates by his will (p. 1037) he drives (or directs) everyone according to his will (p. 1241), pain or pleasure are bestowed through God's will (Japji 1).

They alone become nobles in God's Court who obey his orders. (p. 1241).

"God does whatever he wills" (p. 475) and only what he wills comes to pass for "there is no other Doer than he" (p. 154).

> "All manifest things are forms of his will
> His will is indefinable!
> Of his will is made all sentient life;
> It is his will that some are great and others are small,
> That some are brought under grace (bakhasisa)
> and others transmigrate.
> All existence is bound by his will." (J. 2.)

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Presumably by introducing the concept of hukam before he characterises God in any other way Nanak is stating three points about the Guru and emphasising them.

He is active and life sustaining. So dynamism is contrasted with the non-ways, those of avoiding pollution, ascetism, fasting and meditating. Though the Sikh meditates upon the Name yet, because of his understanding of God this is activity not passivity, the ideal ashrama for the Sikh is that of householder and Guru Nanak is revered as a sannyasin who realised withdrawal through the grhastha way of life.

> "In the ages endless
> God himself is the all-feeder." (J. 3.)

Secondly, he is constant and reliable: the one who trusts the Guru may find him 'smiling in eternal repose, free from care' (J. 3.) - but not free from concern.

> "God, by his will, has prescribed the
> path of life." (J. 3.)

Thirdly, this God is personal - and conceived of as male, but without consort, though the references lie outside the Japji. Though he is 'sat' and one could apply the terms cit and anand to him also yet he is not the pure being, abstract and consequently inactive and remote of some Indian philosophical thought. He is the one whose love cleansed the understanding of the devotee who meditates upon it. (J. 25). He is the great giver, though himself free from desire. (J. 25.)

The concept of hukam, it may be argued, underpins the whole thought of Guru Nanak. The worthwhile or worthless nature of an act is not something objective and external, value depends upon conformity to hukam.

> "If it please the Lord
> In holy waters I would bathe!
> If it please him not
> Bathing in holy waters is of no avail!" (J. 6.)
>
> "Whatever pleases him is the only good." (J. 16.)

The creation resulting from hukam is endless (J. 35), the Krishnas, ...s, Siddhis and Buddhas, naths and lines of Kings being part of it. God's ...otees are not confined to this earth or universe. (J. 27).

W. H. McLeod and Sikh scholas prefer various terms to translate ...word hukam. One need not debate the preferences but instead may pass on

to noting that as personal God himself may be known, not only his will or the divine order. In fact hukam itself cannot be perceived for what it really is unless God discloses himself as he did to Guru Nanak at the river Bein near Sultanpur.

The Japji contains many descriptions of the Guru of Nanak. He is the true Lord, having a true name speaking a language of measureless love. (J.4.) In return for this love man can do no more than meditate upon the name (nam simran). (J. 4.)

His likeness cannot be imagined. He is totally beyond description (J. 22), he is unique.

> "God can neither be created nor can he be made,
> He is all by himself - the Absolute One." (J. 5.)

Rishis attempted to find his limits, the limit of existence, but they failed. Ultimately scripture can only say 'neti, neti' (J. 23.) He is the one source of the heavens which ancient texts number as 18,000.

> "Endless is his praise, endless the sayings about him.
> Endless his doings, endless his givings.
> Endless the seeings and endless the hearings.
> Endless seems to be his divine will.
> Endless seems to be his created world.
> Nobody knows the limits of the Infinite Lord.
> The greater we say, still greater he is." (J. 24.)

Through the practice of nam simran one may possibly know his greatness, if he grants the insight.

As in pauri 24 'endless' (antna) has been the constant refrain so in pauri 26 it is priceless (amul). Beyond price are his virtues and the virtues he gives from his treasury, in vain the Vedas and Puranas, many Brahmas, and many Indras, many gopis and many Krishnas have attempted to express him.

> "If God creates as many more beings as he
> has created already;
> Even then he cannot tell his greatness.
> God is as great as he wishes to be.
> He the truthful one alone knows about himself." (J. 26.)

His praises are sung not only by human devotees but also by the elements, air, water and fire. The recorders of deeds, the Chitra and the Gupta also sing his praise, and even more notably Siva and Brahma (J. 27.). Indeed in pauri 30 the trimurti myth is taken up only to be dismissed. Creation, preservation and dissolution are in the hands of God alone, 'He sees

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

all, himself unseen'. 'He is the primal in the pure, without beginning, without end. In unchanging form from age to age.'' Nanak's God is no avatar, he is the one who lies beyond mythology, the Krishnas and Sivas, the Brahmas and Indras, the Siddhas, Buddhas and Naths are all part of his endless creation. (J. 35.) The myths and the many beings who figure in them are not dismissed as illusory or false in the Japji. Elsewhere the Sikh Gurus reject them but not in this poem. They are mentioned here to exemplify spiritual heights which, Nanak says, may be attained by hearing the word of God and nam. (9). The first Guru is not concerned with attacking Saivite or Vaisnavite Hindus, Yogis or Muslim Pirs except where they make ritual, technique or ostentation ends in themselves. Wholesale repudiation comes later, being clearly seen in the teachings of Guru Arjan. For Nanak, so long as the Truth and nothing less is the focal point of faith all ways seem to possess equal validity. So, in pauris 8, 9, 10 and 11 'hearing' alone is the way of knowledge, and liberation. Each of them ends

> 'Nanak, the bhagats are ever at bliss,
> By hearing the name of God Sorrow (duka)
> and sin (pap) are banished.'

In pauri 27 Nanak asks 'Where is the door and where is the house in which, O Lord, thou dwellest and takest care of all creation?' Before answering the question he takes the reader into the divine court where Siddhis, Sadhus, pandits, rishis, Siva, Brahma, Indra, the goddesses, the heavenly spheres and the whole universe sing his praise. The implied answer, of course, is that the whole universe is the abode of the Wonderful Lord. However, he and it are not identical. He is its creator, he witnesses and cherishes it.

> 'He who has created the whole universe, is
> existent now, will exist in the future, and will
> remain in existence forever.
> He who has created the empheral world of various
> colours kinds and species:
> He witnesses it and cherishes it as and how it
> pleases him.
> He does what pleases him and who can question his
> doings?
> That Lord, who is lord of lords, is the master.
> Nanak says, let us obey his hukam.' (27)

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

The Guru described in the Japji is the One, Brahman, the Being symbolised by the sound Om. Clearly personal he [25] is the upholder and cause of all life and constantly active in human affairs, both at the individual and, as we shall see at the communal, historical level. It might be argued that in the term hukam Nanak combines the Hindu concept of rta with a personalised concept of God related very much to normal human experience of the guru and sishya relationship. Hukam has to do with cosmic order and also with moral order, but also, and here unlike some Hindu interpolations of rta, hukam refers to a dynamic process of divine activity more permanent than the vital but occasional involvement of, say, Krishna who in the Gita describes himself as descending into the world for the protection of the good, the destruction of evildoers and the setting up of righteousness whenever the law of dharma withers away. (B.G. 4, 7 and 8). For Nanak this withering away cannot happen, men may be ignorant of God and his will or may choose to reject them in which event God sends someone to declare them, (this was the role in which the Sikh Gurus saw themselves cast) but hukam is the moment by moment sustainer of the universe.

Being personal God is to some degree arbitrary, though this aspect of his nature must be seen within the characteristic of concern for man. He is the Guru, the one who is chosen to be his sishya is aware that life, death, wealth, power, pain and pleasure are all derived from the guru and are all means by which release is given. Actions have no intrinsic value. Their worth depends upon the acceptability to God. (6 and 2). Man has therefore no cause for pride, no one is low or high (33), before the Guru all are sishyas. As his smile falls upon them so they may feel pleasure and bliss but not conceit.

> 'It is not in our power to ask for or
> give anything,
> It is not in our power to live or die.
> It is not in our power to acquire wealth or
> have pleasure.
> It is not in our power to know the way of
> true living.' (J. 33.)

The Epilogue of the Japji concludes

> 'Thou who meditates on the Name with all
> the heart,
> Attain the goal of life!
> Nanak, their faces lit with Divine Light,
> And with them many others freed and liberated.'

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

One can scarely resist the temptation to envisage a group of sishyas sitting in the evening sunlight receiving darshan from this guru, and one doubts whether the temptation should be resisted.

Notably, throughout the Japji the Guru is God, never Nanak. He is completely silent about himself, accepting for himself the strictures of pauri 28 in which the true yogi is described.

> 'Put on[26] ear-rings of contentment,
> Make hardwork your begging bowl.
> Rub your body with ashes of contemplation.
> Make awareness of your mortality your
> Begging bowl.
> Let chastity be your yogic method,
> Faith in God your staff,
> Universal brotherhood your yogic order."

Equally notable is the second line of this verse and the general rejection of the way of the sannyasin found in the poem. The way of the sishya is that which Nanak himself followed in his later days at Kartarpur, the way of work, in his case as a farmer, with the name of God on his lips. This is the divine service (seva) which God requires.

In the Mool Mantra, it may be said, the phrase 'Gur prasad' is ambiguous and could refer to Nanak or to God. With the process of history this is understandable; God revealed himself through the bani uttered by Nanak and his successors. In the Japji, however, the Guru is God alone, the Guru's grace is that which enlightens and inspires Nanak. The Japji is the hymn in which the servant praises his spiritual preceptor and declares the obligations which God lays first of all upon him, and then, but secondly, by implication upon all who acknowledge Nanak as the one who mediates the word of God.

The morning hymn of the Sikhs is less theology than devotional poetry, its purpose being to express the unity of the sishya with the Lord. ...e process of reading it, especially since 1708 when the tenth Guru died, ...devotee probably develops an idealistic picture of the human Gurus, ...gh identifying them with the one about whom Nanak wrote in the Japji. ...identification is natural, especially in India with its predominantly ...tic tradition, but when it was composed Nanak clearly pointed away ...himself to the Sat Guru of the Mool Mantra. The distinction, blurred ...e, tradition and culture is unusual in Indian thought but, as we shall see,

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

very real in the teaching of the ten Gurus about themselves.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

(3) God as Sat Guru in the Other Compositions of Guru Nanak.

The term Sat Guru is used frequently of God but Nanak was also fond of using others, including the simple words 'Guru', 'Lord' or 'Master'. Frequently, these words are accompanied by adjectives, especially the one (lord), true (Lord or Guru), the exalted (Guru) or the Luminous[27] (Lord), i.e. the one who gives perception.[28] Above all others is used the word Nam. It is as popular with Nanak as 'Ram' was with Kabir. It is this free use of synonyms, sometimes three in the same verse which creates ambiguity and makes it difficult to know whether a distinct person (the human Guru) or the one Sat Guru is meant.

The Mool Mantra has already been described as a summary of Guru Nanak's teaching about God. It will therefore be used as the basis for this section.

IK ONKAR

One immediately turns to the bani of this name which begins on page 929 of the Guru Granth Sahib.

> 'The One Lord (Onkar) created Brahma.
> The One Lord fashioned the human mind.
> From the one Lord emanated mountains and ages.
> The one Lord created the Vedas.'

He is liberator as well as creator:

> 'It is through the one Lord that the world is saved.
> It is through the Lord that God-conscious beings are emancipated.'

This concept has far-reaching implications. In terms of doctrine,

> 'There are six systems, six their teachers and six their doctrines.
> But the teacher of teachers (Guru of Gurus) is but one Lord though he has various vestures.
> O Father, follow that wherein the praises of the creator are uttered.
> In it rests thy greatness. (p. 12.)

A false understanding of the world resulting from ignorance of the Guru's teaching, or rejection of it, may cause man to see plurality but ultimately there is none.

He is the one in all men 'by the hymns of the Guru this invisible one is praised and seen in every heart.' (p. 54.)

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

'Where soever I see, I see thee alone.' (p. 55).

A consequence of this is that he is to be found in every soul and is 'alone the true Lord of myself and of other beings of numberless worlds.' (p. 15.)

Confronted by this stress on the ultimate one-ness of things and revelation through the Guru the varnashram dharma goes, also the inferiority of women and the differences between Muslim and Hindu.

> 'From the one Lord all are born.
> The routes are two (Hindu and Muslim),
> but know that their master is one.
> Under the Guru's instruction recognise his will.'

Says Nanak, 'I praise the one Lord who is contained in all forms (rūp), colours (varn) and hearts.' (p. 223)

> 'Another's love and wealth abide in man's mind.
> He is devastated by lust, wrath and ego.
> Whom should I call the second when there is none else?
> Amongst all is the unique, pure Lord.
> The second is the evil intellect which speaks of duality.
> Comes, goes and dies, he who harbour love for the second.
> Over the earth and sky I see not another.
> Among all, females and males, the Lord's light permeates.
> In the sun, the moon, the lamps, I perceive the Lord's light. ..
> .. The pious person (gurmukhi) knows the pure one alone.' (p. 223)

SAT NAM

The Japji begins with the words,

> 'True in the prime, true in the beginning of ages,
> true he is even now and true he shall be.' (p. 1.)

In addition to innumerable uses of the phrases Sat Nam or Sat Guru applied to God there are also descriptions of true religion but above all to correct apprehension and to truth as an ethical quality.

'True religion consists neither of abiding at tombs or on burning grounds nor in going into false trances. It neither consists of roaming the world nor in bathing at places of pilgrimage.'

As in the Gita 'The way to true religion is found by dwelling in God and remaining detached in the midst of worldly attachments.' (p. 730)

'Truth is realised when the true one dwells in the heart.' (p. 468)

'Truth proceeds from the one Lord.' (p. 56.)

'Truth is the highest of all virtues, but higher still is truthful living.' (p. 62)

'The Guru's slaves (gurmukhi) like not untruth. With sincere love they are dyed in nothing but truth.

The mammon worshipper likes not truthfulness. False is the foundation of the false.

Being tinctured with truth, one meets the Guru. The true persons are absorbed in the true Lord.' (p. 22)

As God's chief quality is truth so it must characterise the human disciple and must finally prosper as it is grounded in eternity.

'Falsehood exhausts itself, truth alone prevails ultimately.' (p. 953)

'One who takes along the burden of falsehood must grieve hereafter; but one who gathers truth here is blessed here and hereafter.' (p. 1108)

KARTA-PURUKH (Creator - all - Pervading).

Again the word Creator is used of God many times. Frequently it merely used as a synonym for God, presumably thoughtfully to provoke mind of the hearer or reader and to affirm that Sat or Nam is also Karta ough the word may not be accompanied by further teaching. It simply nds by itself.

However, there are occasions when its significance is explained explored and Nanak appears eager to make four points at least. First is the efficient, material and moral cause of the universe. It exists a result of his wilful action. Secondly, as such God pre-exists the gods, ra, Brahma, Siva, Vishnu. Thirdly, the creation is vast and evolving. rthly, the creator pervades his creation, there is only the one. The ld has no separate, independent existence apart from God.

'The Lord himself is known in three worlds. He alone is the ficent Lord all the ages through. There is no other. As it pleases so thou keepest all.' (p. 933)

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

'He is, he will be. The creation will end but not he who created
e phenomena.' (p. 6)

'He created the gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva.
He gave the Vedas the Brahma and put him to
worship according to them.
Vishnu came in ten incarnations such as Raja
Ramchandra.
He attacked and killed the demons, it was all
his will.
The Lord Siva served the Lord, but could not fathom
his vastness.' (p. 1279)

There is a hint here that what the gods were in a distant age the
ru now is. Sacrifice and the Vedas are not said never to have had
icacy but they are spent.

Turning more to philosophy than mythology Nanak wrote

'The three modes of nature (i. e. gunas of prakrti)
have been created by him.
He who has created himself is free of maya. He
himself has fashioned the universe as a sport of his.
He hath produced the three modes of nature and
hath enhanced attachment to maya.'

'Thou thyself sendest beings into the world and thyself recallest
n. Creating, creating the creation, thou beholdest it.' (p. 1242)
is affirmation of God as creator - controller there is almost a semitic
phasis.

'God of himself created his own self: and he himself assumed the
Second beside himself he created nature wherein he lives and which
eholds with delight.' (p. 463)

'The entire universe is the manifestation of his Name.' (p. 4)

'The will of this one alone pervades all the worlds, as all creation
orn of him.' (p. 223)

Nanak's affinity for the present tense in speaking of creation and his
ef that the dynamic God permeates it are regarded as evidence for an
ving universe.

In the Guru Granth Sahib generally one is confronted with anti-myth.
gods may have been, perhaps they still are, but they are not God, they
knowledge and power. Especially, as one would expect, in passages
ed to creation, these views are expressed.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

It might be pointed out that Sikhism suffers from no post-Darwinian problems. God and scientific theories in no way conflict. The Sikh would probably say that man is vainly searching now through science as once through yoga or the vedas for the one who has disclosed himself through the Guru.'

Finally on this point, though God permeates the universe which he created for his own delight, [29] and though he is ever visible through his creation [30] Nanak was no pantheist. God the doer and the cause [31] is formless [32] and detached. [33] The remaining affirmations of the Mool Mantra serve to affirm this and prevent the immanence of the Creator in his creation being misunderstood.

NIRBHAU (Fearless) NIRVAIR (Without hatred).

The remaining qualities of God listed in the Mool Mantra, apart from his grace seem to be mentioned in order to affirm his uniqueness, detachment, composure, evenness and sovereignty. He is the perfect being, the true yogi, the ideal Siddha.

> 'All have fear written on their foreheads, but the one Lord above is fearless' says Nanak. (p. 465)
>
> 'The Guru's servants are pleasing to the Lord. Them the Lord forgives and for them the fear of death's courier is no more. They who heartily love the one Lord, dispelling their doubt the Lord unites them with himself. Fear-free, limitless, and infinite is the Lord. He, the creator is pleased with truth.' (p. 1190)

In the Ramayana Vishvamitra, [34] the king who wished to become a brahmin struck fear into Indra and the heavenly council. The austerities of Dhruva caused similar terror. [35] Agastya, the yogi who delivered the brahmins and gods by drinking the ocean dry was ever afterwards revered with fear by those he had saved. [36] Nanak's Guru is far removed from this kind of world.

There are many tales of vindictive gods but hatred and anger are divisive qualities which could have no place in Nanak's monotheism. Throughout innumerable ages God has been creating life but always without malice. [37] On the contrary enemies become friends when they meet God, the Guru. [38]

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

AKAL (Eternal and Deathless) MURIT (Formless) AJUNI (Unborn)

The three qualities must obviously be taken together.

> 'The sun and the day, the moon and the night,
> and the innumerable stars shall pass away.
> God alone is eternal and shall stay for ever.' (p. 64)
>
> 'The true one existed in every age. As for man, who is there who has not died or who shall not end in death?' (p. 1022)
>
> 'He is inaccessible and incomprehensible. He has no master (anathi) and is unborn. I know the one Lord by the Guru's instruction.' (p. 1233)
>
> 'Thousands are thine eyes, yet thou hast no eyes.
> Thousands are thy forms, yet thou hast not even one.
> Thousands are thy pure feet, even then thou hast not one foot.
> Thousands are thy noses and yet thou art without a nose. I am bewitched by these plays of thine.
> Amongst all there is light, that light thou art. By his light the light shines within all souls. By the Guru's teaching the divine light becomes manifest.' (p. 13)

In a sabad 'Thitti' set to the Rag Bilawal (p. 839 ff.) Nanak described God's acts in fourteen lunar days. In the first he affirmed the Lord as unique, peerless, immortal, unborn, without caste and without involvement, unapproachable and beyond comprehension, without form or outline. He does not describe creation in a systematic way, as in the first and second chapters of Genesis. In fact sometimes the use of the device of numbering lunar days seems to have little purpose if one makes this comparison for really it is a song of the soul's ascent. However, in the course of the hymn the nirguna concept of God is stated, as in the quotation given above. This is the one Nanak calls Nam. This is the Lord of the universe, known through the Guru's instruction, whose mansion (mahal) is found in the believer's own home. He is the creator of the gods and goddesses, the vedas, puranas, shastras and the gunas. This Lord is Lord of the legendary nine yogis alone giving stability of mind and freedom from death. On the fourteenth day, the day before that of no-moon, the human goal is described. The man who reaches the 'fourth state', that transcending the three gunas of optimisim, egotism and pessimism as well as overcoming time remains absorbed in the Lord and beholding him through the Guru, is merged in him. The disciple has also become timeless and

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

deathless and will not be reborn.

SAIBHAN (Self-existent)

In the havelies of Vallabha the swarupa is believed to be God himself. [39] The same belief is held of the statue of Swami Narajan at Vadtal, [40] and probably lies deep in the hearts of many followers of the way of bhakti. Certainly the enthusiasm in the Bradford Hindu Temple when the murti or Radha and Krishna were installed [41] and the spontaneous singing and dancing suggested that the worshippers now believed God was present in a new and fuller way. To some extent this could result in the belief in automatic darshan, that is that when the curtains were drawn the worshipper would see not only the statue but God himself. Pocock [42] was clearly expected to have such an experience by Swamidas who had taken him to the Laxminarayan temple.

Such popular views may have influenced Guru Nanak to stress the independence of God.

In the Japji he said,

> 'He cannot be installed nor can he be made.
> The immaculate God is self-created.' (p. 1.)

Rejecting the smarta tradition Nanak said,

> 'God cannot be won through rites or deeds.
> Learning cannot help in comprehending him.
> The four vedas and the puranas have also
> failed to reveal his mystery.
> The true Guru alone has revealed him to me.' (p. 55)

The rites and practices could refer to brahminical sacrifices but elsewhere the ability to realise God through pilgrimage or yogic ascetisism were similarly discounted.

In Siddha Gosht the yogis were repeatedly told that their way was vain.

> 'When the imperceptible Lord reveals himself to a
> man, then he is blessed with the knowledge which
> yogis think they obtain through breath control in the
> central, left and right bronchi.
> The true Lord is above the three devices of breath
> control.
> By the true Guru's instruction one merges with him.' (p. 944)

As for the effort expended in pilgrimages, (tirtha) the waste of energy is never more clearly expressed than in the following words:

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

> 'If anyone goes to bathe at a tirath with
> an evil heart and the body of a thief one
> part is cleansed, the other becomes filthier.
> Outwardly washed like a faqir's gourd, inside
> he is poison and impurity. A sadhu possesses
> goodness even if he does not bathe, a thief even
> if he bathes remains a thief.' (p. 789)

How then may liberation be obtained?

GUR PRASADI (The Grace of the Guru)

Many quotations given so far state that the Guru's instruction or grace is the only way. But who is the Guru? Nanak, God himself, or some unnamed Guru of Nanak's?

Worshippers at the Gurdwara may not be theologians but to disregard their beliefs would be to present a religion which is unreal. In answering these questions all deny that Nanak had a human Guru. Most I have spoken to say that 'Gur Prasadi' refers to Nanak. Children invariably say, when shown a picture of Guru Nanak, 'That is my / our God.' Adults are more circumspect differentiating between Nanak and God but already in this chapter we have noticed how God and man merge when release is obtained and in any immanentist theology the distinction of creator and creation is apt to cause difficulties.

The views of scholars on the term 'Gur Prasad' vary. Professor Dewan Singh[43] translates the phrase with the sentence 'He is known and realised by the grace of the Guru', and for him 'Guru' means Nanak.

'God', he says, 'is inscrutable, unknowable, and beyond human knowledge or perception. Still Guru Nanak, the chosen one and 'the perfect being', 'the true enlightener of souls' (the True Satguru), who according to Sikh belief saw God face to face and thus had a positivistic, personal knowledge and experience of the Divine Being, was able to make a final and original statement in his concept of Godhood.' (p. 20). Later, he writes, 'God is not only too great and too beyond to come under human preview, but he is absolutely disdainful and independent in his primal, pristine reality.'[44]

'It is therefore the merciful, the charitable Guru who comes to the rescue of helpless humanity. The Guru has himself realised and seen the supreme Lord of the universe face to face, just as men see each other face to face. He gives to men what we call spiritual insight by which they are

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

able to see the Invisible One.' (p. 56/57).

Khushwant Singh offers the rendering 'By the Guru's grace shalt thou worship him',[45] adding in his commentary 'Next to belief in God, Nanak demands of his followers implicit faith in their guru. This is in conformity with the Sufi's pir-mureed and Bhakti's Guru--chela tradition. Without the Guru as guide, insists Nanak, no one can attain moksha - release.[46] The guru or the Satguru - the true guru - is just a shade below God.

Gurmit Singh does not comment upon the words in his little book, 'A Critique of Sikhism', but very interestingly he refers to it arguing that Sikh Gurus replaced the doctrine of karma with the doctrine of grace.' (p. 22)

Professor Kohli[47] writes 'Almighty God, whose qualities have been mentioned above can only be realised through the grace of the True Guru (Gurprasad). -- In the Adi Granth, True Guru has been defined as that Being who has full knowledge of Sat Purukh or ever existing Purusha. He sees nothing but God, therefore, he is without any enmity and is also Benevolent like God.

Despite the capitalisations one must conclude that the reference is to the human guru, Nanak.

However, this writer is aware of the simplicity of these conclusions when he adds,

> 'The Name of the Lord is the Lord himself.
> The word of the Guru is the Guru Himself.
> The Guru and God are one. The Guru and
> the Sika (disciple) are one. The disciple
> bows before the Guru even in the presence of God,
> because it was through the grace of the Guru that
> the disciple has been able to realise God.' (p. 352)

In his 'Outlines of Sikh Thought' the same author provides a further comment. 'By the grace of the Lord we meet the Guru and by the Grace of the Guru we meet the Lord.' (p. 119). The human Guru would appear to be the means by whom the total and overwhelming grace of God becomes intelligible and capable, to some extent, of being comprehended.

Professor Parkash Singh, in his discussion of the Japji Sahib[48] outlines the concept of God provided by the hymn and says, 'We can do nothing by ourselves without his grace. .. He confers such grace on those who work at self-purification through obedience to the Holy Word.' (p. 272)

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

In so doing he describes the present situation, the means of grace being in the scriptures. By implication we may suppose him to believe that originally the human Guru was the medium.

In an earlier article in the same collection Dr. Bhai Jodh Singh very clearly distinguishes between God and the human Guru whose instruction is essential if a man is to find release. Though he carefully stresses the nature of the Guru in the passage which is quoted below, he none the less proceeds to provide an abundance of quotations from the Guru Granth Sahib, many of which might more properly seem to refer to God alone.[49]

Of the human Gurus he writes:

"According to Sikh teachings God is birthless, hence the Sikh Gurus do not proclaim themselves as incarnations of God. They do not claim for themselves any special position vis à vis their disciples, except that they have achieved the object which the Sikhs are seeking and can guide them to the goal through the knowledge gained by experience. Ultimately a Sikh who follows the Guru's instructions will reach the same stage of spiritual progress and enjoy the eternal beatitude which the Guru enjoys. At this last stage, Guru Ramdas says, 'The Sikh who follows the Guru's instructions will become one with the Guru. No differences will be felt between the Guru and the Sikh.' A Sikh is, therefore, expected to have complete faith in the Guru."[50]

Elsewhere[51] Bhai Jodh Singh states, 'Some interpreters have not rendered this phrase (Gur Prasadi) correctly. It is not an adjective standing for God. It means realisation through the Guru's grace.'

Not very surprisingly, when M. A. Macauliffe came to translate this passage of the Mool Mantra with the help of Sikh teachers he used the single word bountiful and in a footnote added, 'The ordinary translation of Gur Prasad, 'By the Guru's favour', does not seem appropriate here.' One can only conjecture at what passed between him and the gyanis but presumably he saw the whole Mantra as God-centred and could not therefore accept their wish to interpret the passage in terms of the human Guru.

W. H. McLeod[52] gives considerable attention to Nanak's teaching about grace. As with most other scholars he uses the Mool Mantra as the basis for his discussion. The immanence of God provides his starting point

and he writes, 'God who dwells in all creation has his particular abode within the human heart.' In support he quotes a line from the Adi Granth (p. 838) 'The one Oankar, wholly apart, immortal, unborn, without caste, wholly free, ineffable, without form or visible sign, but searching I perceived him in every heart.'

For the God-within to be realised God must take the initiative', all we receive is by the grace of the Beneficent One.' (p. 5.) The Guru is the one who has discovered, or had revealed to him the God who is within. Professor McLeod concludes that 'For Guru Nanak, as for Kabir, the word of the Sat guru is the true revelation, and for him also this Guru is God.' [53] In the glossary he adds 'guru: a spiritual preceptor, usually a person but sometimes understood as the divine inner voice.'

This view of 'gur prasadi' would seem on a priori grounds to be more to be more correct than the usual Sikh interpretation. Nanak's humility and his (and Sikhism's) refusal to assert that only believers in himself or the Sikh creed could attain liberation would seem inexplicable if 'gur prasadi' meant 'by the grace of Nanak'. The Guru in fact hints at a note of reservation in this doctrine of grace.

> "Many there be who long for a vision of thee, but
> few who meet the Guru, the word, and so perceive thee." (p. 1188)
>
> "If it is inscribed in the records of one's former
> deeds then one meets the true Guru" (p. 421)
>
> "When the True Guru becomes merciful man grieves
> not ever.
> When the True Guru becomes merciful, then man
> knows no pain.
> When the True Guru becomes merciful man enjoys
> God's love.
> When the True Guru becomes merciful man is absorbed
> in the True Lord." (p. 149)
>
> "If the Guru wishes mind and body are rendered
> as cool as the moon." (p. 751).

The explanation that these refer to the human Guru is obnoxious but apart from this subjective view it is illogical when considered against such statements as the following:

> "All truths and austerities, all goodnesses and the
> magnificences of the miraculous men: without thee
> none has attained such powers.
> With thy grace they are procured. No one can stop
> and obstruct their flow.
> What can the helpless utterer do? (p. 9)

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

> "As thou inspirest me, so do I praise thee, O Lord. Myself, I am ignorant and can say nothing." (p. 795)

Perhaps it is correct to link the ideas of Karma and prasad and suggest that a consequence of a previous birth is that a man is born into a state wherein he can perceive the Guru within him.

Two quotations support the argument.

> "If it is inscribed on the records of one's former deeds then one meets the True Guru." (p. 421)

> "Without devotion the True Guru is not obtained and without destiny one is not blessed with the Lord's loving adoration.
> Without good fortune the society of the saints is not acquired, and through the Guru's grace the Lord's name is obtained.
> God creates and beholds all and is hidden within every heart.
> By the Guru's grace, he becomes manifest to pious persons". (p. 1172)

The second part of this latter quotation may contain the solution to the problem of gur prasad.

The guru is really the gurbani, the word of God which exists inaudible but potentially liberating within a human being. Many ambiguous passages become clear if this solution is accepted and apparent inconsistencies in Nanak's teachings are removed.

Ultimately Nanak's position is not only monotheistic, it is virtually monistic and his utterances on the subject of the Guru and his grace must be interpreted consistently within this insight and not in such a way as to fracture it.

> "There are six systems, six their teachers and six their doctrines.
> But the teacher of teachers is one Lord, though he has various vestures." (p. 357)

The Guru, the Gurbani and the Lord, God are essentially one. By grace this is seen. Duality is dispelled.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

The Concept of Guru in the Teachings of Guru Nanak.

Footnotes to Chapter Two.

1. See the final chapter of this study for such views as that of Teja Singh in Sikhism : its Ideals and Institutions.
2. See for example, Brent, 1972, Lannoy 1972.
3. The Loves of Krishna, Archer, cf. A.G. p. 721.
4. Asarupa cf. Sanskrit svarupa, 'form' of God.
5. This utterance is from the Miharban Janam Sakhi gosht 28/29. The account given here conflates Puratan 10 and Miharban 28/29. In neither is the river named.
6. McLeod 1968 p. 164.
7. Jodh Singh's version, Taran Singh 1970 (page 57) reads:

   "God, symbolised by Om is the one only.
   Satya by name.
   He is the creator, All-pervading, without fear,
   without enmity, unaffected by time, unborn, self-existent.
   (To be realised) through the grace of the guru."

   The UNESCO rendering (page 28) is;

   "There is one God,
   Eternal Truth is his name.
   Maker of all things.
   Fearing nothing and at enmity with nothing,
   Timeless is his image;
   Not begotten, being of His own Being:
   By the grace of the Guru, made known to men."

   Man Mohan Singh, in his translation of the Adi Granth (1962) prefers:

   "There is but one God.
   True is His Name, creative His personality and immortal
   His form. He is without fear, without enmity, unborn
   and self-illumined.
   By the Guru's grace He is obtained. (Vol. 1, page 1).
8. Mandukya Upanishad 1. 1; Bhagavad Gita 8. 13. 60.
9. Katha Upanishad 2. 15.
10. See note on maya in the glossary.
11. Mundaka Upanishad 1. 1. 2.
12. Parrinder 1970, p. 95.
13. Bhagavad Gita 13. 21-23.
14. A.G. p. 464.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

15. A.G. p. 764.

16. This term as well as jugad Guru is used in the Sukhmani of Guru Arjan (A.G. p. 262)

17. Kohli 1961, p. 348.

18. Kohli 1961, p. 367.

19. Harnam Singh 1957, p. 8.

20. Dewan Singh 1970, p. 10.

21. Nihal Singh 1969 p. 264.

22. Harnam Singh 1957 p. 1.

23. Dewan Singh 1970 p. 10. cf. Parkash Singh in Nihal Singh p. 265.

24. op. cit. p. 265.

25. cf. Japji pauri 5 "God is the mother, Parvati. This is one of the rare references to the female aspect of divinity. In Sikhism God is male and has no consort other than his sishyas.

cf. A.G. p. 21,

> "The Guru-ward within whose mind abides the Lord; him the Guru unites with the Lord's union. If I surrender my body like a bride to the Master, the Enjoyer will enjoy me. Make not love with him who appears to be but a passing-show. That Lord Consort on His Couch enjoys the virtuous and chaste brides."

26. The word saram is variously translated. In Sabdarath, an authorised punjabi commentary on the Guru Granth Sahib, Vol. 1. p. 6, (Shromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, 1963), the rendering 'hard work', as opposed to 'contentment' is given. So also Sahib Singh, Sri Granth Sahib Darpan, 1962, p. 108.

27. the word used is joti, one popular with the naths and with Kabir who uses it in the mystical experience given by the Sat Guru: 'the Sat Guru met me on the path and he put a lamp in my hand'. (p. 155 Vaudeville, 1964). cf A.G. p. 940 where Nanak in reply to the Siddhas, says, 'By the Guru's grace I have found the joti within me.'

28. an extensive list of other terms is given in Kohli 1961 pages 336-7.

29. A.G. p. 433.

30. A.G. p. 1042.

31. A.G. p. 418.

32. A.G. p. 750.

33. A.G. p. 1233.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

34. Book 1. 57-66.
35. *Vishnu Purana* 1. 11-12.
36. *Mahabharata* 3.96.
37. A.G. p. 931.
38. A.G. p. 934.
39. Parekh : *Shri Vallabhacharya* p. 148.
40. Pocock : *Mind, Body and Wealth* p. 124.
41. Witnessed by the writer August 5th 1974.
42. Pocock, op. cit. p. 124.
43. Dewan Singh 1970 p. 10.
44. a reference to *Japji pauri* 3.
45. Khuswant Singh 1969 p. 25.
46. He refers here to A.G. p. 1040.
47. Kohli 1961 p. 348.
48. Nihal Singh 1969.
49. op. cit. pages 16 and 17.
50. op. cit. p. 15.
51. Taran Singh, 1970, p. 61 footnote.
52. McLeod 1968, see references to 'grace' in his doctrinal index, p. 249.
53. op. cit. p. 190.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Chapter Three.

The Concept of Guru in the post-Nanak Sabads of the Adi Granth and in the Dasam Granth.

Introduction. The Historical Development of Guruship.

Before considering the writings of the Sikh Gurus after Nanak and the works of bards which are also found in the Guru Granth Sahib it is necessary to look at the political situation in North India and the response of the Gurus to it. During the years between the deaths of Nanak (1539) and the assassination of Guru Gobind Singh (1708) the changes which took place in Sikh thought and organisation were very much in response not to contemporary and rival, or sympathetic religious movements but to the Mogul Empire. It was Islam in its political form rather than its spiritual presence which weighed most heavily upon Sikhism. As for Hindu influence this was comparatively slight. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a smarta reaction is discernible which probably resulted in Kabir being given the brahmin Ramanand as his Guru and in the sect of Vallabha excluding sudras.[1] The same influence may have prompted the Sikhs to turn from living Guru to written word and to exalt the collection of hymns to the position of holy scripture and have forced them into the position of regarding their panth as a third way to the Hindu and Muslim.[2] However, undoubtedly the dominant influence accounting for the form which this distinctive form of Hinduism took was that of the Moguls.

In 1526 Babur took Delhi after a series of campaigns which invoked the moral wrath of Nanak but which were seen, in themselves, as a judgement upon the indigenous society. In religious terms the coming of Babur and the dynastic disputes only resolved with the accession of Akbar in 1556 seem to have had little impact upon the Sikhs, their movement simply grew unnoticed. With Akbar the situation changed.

This Emperor, whose reign (1556 - 1605 CG) coincided almost perfectly with that of Elizabeth 1 of England, has been described as one of the supreme architects of the movement for Muslim-Hindu religious synthesis,[3] though orthodoxy looked askance. Though he was punctilious in his Muslim observances (the five daily prayers, the Fast), revered the tombs of Muslim saints and

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

swept out the palace mosque, yet his attitudes were the subject of suspicion. He was thought to be under the influence of his Hindu wife. Jesuits at his court often thought that his conversion to Christianity was imminent and their hopes, though always dashed, must have been accompanied by Muslim fears. It has been argued that he intended to establish a syncretistic religion of his own devising, Din-i-Ilahi (Divine Faith). His decree of 1579, giving him the traditional right to decide between interpretations offered to him by the theologians on points of faith or jurisprudence, was viewed as an attempt to prepare its foundations. His religious interest and policy may have had a political aspect but was no less personal or sincere for that.

In this total context must be seen his respect for the Sikh Gurus and his visit to Amar Das. This occurred during a visit to Lahore when to took the opportunity to make a detour through Goindwal. Seeing needy people being fed in the langar he offered the Guru villages to provide him with revenue to support this commendable work. When the Guru declined this gift he gave them to the Guru's daughter. It was on this land that the Darbar Sahib at Amritsar was eventually built. In the spirit of the age its foundation stone was laid by a Muslim saint, Mian Mir. With Akbar's death the Mogul Empire changed its religious policy. Jahangir was a pious man, giving part of each day to the copying of the Qur'an but he was a strict Muslim sharing the orthodox opposition to his father's religious policies and also a suspicion of political rivals. The Sikhs were doubly suspect. With his accession their involvement in politics and ultimately the independence struggle began and from 1606 to 1708 when Guru Gobind Singh died this new Mogul attitude contributed to the way Sikhism developed.

Looking now at the historical development of the Guruship in detail we must begin with the election of Lehna who, in 1539 became the second Guru Angad. The name itself 'limb of me' (ang - limb) is significant as it asserted that this was to be the new body which the spirit which was the essential Nanak would occupy. Also, too obvious for comment but too important to be overlooked a| succession had begun and each Guru had now an acknowledged human Guru. The Sant tradition of not naming or acknowledging a human Guru had been laid aside. In each of the nine cases from Angad to Gobind Singh, however, the acknowledged Guru was the same, Nanak, to indicate the one origin of their ideas.

The third Guru, Amar Das imposed a tax upon his followers for charitable purposes and the loose bonds between the Guru and the communities for

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

which Angad had made copies of Nanak's hymns were becoming formalised.

Guru Arjan built the Darbar Sahib and installed the collection (now called the Adi Granth) in it.

Of it he wrote, 'This Holy Book, (Pothi) is the abode of the Transcendent Lord (Parameshah).' (p. 1226).

Before his death Arjan saw the passing of the era of peaceful co-existence, in fact he died as a result of imprisonment during the troubles at the beginning of Jahangir's reign.

Consciousness of Sikhism being a third path grew steadily in his guruship and also, with it, a belief in the Sikh community (Sangat) as the means of salvation perhaps in a temporal as well as spiritual sense. The importance he attached to his son, Hargobind, whose name itself, is not insignificant. This will be discussed further in the next section. The often quoted verse which follows is also evidence of a new concept, but one which never achieved clear definition.

> 'I do not keep the Hindu fast, or the Muslim Ramadan.
> I serve him alone who will save me in the end.
> The one Lord of the world is my God. He ministers
> justice to both Hindus and Muslims. I do not go on
> pilgrimage to Mecca or worship at the holy places.... ..
> My body and soul belong to him who is called Allah
> of the Muslims and Ram of the Hindus. (p. 1136). Bhairo 5

Until his last year Muslim pressure cannot be blamed for this change. Smarta hostility may be one reason. The verse repudiates Hinduism as well as Islam. An important reason must be the growth of self-awareness on the part of the Sikhs and a consciousness of a separate identity encouraged by the respect which Akbar showed to the Gurus Amar Das and Ram Das and his interest in receiving a copy of the Adi Granth.

With Arjan the Guru became leader of a consciously separate religious community. His son, Hargobind gave the guruship unmistakeable political characteristics.

Guru Arjan, before his death, had given clear instructions to his son Hargobind that he should prepare to defend the faith with arms if necessary. Accordingly, Hargobind built a fortress in Amritsar, the Lohgarh (castle of steel) and also, overlooking the Darbar Sahib, the Akal Takht where he sat on a throne and held court. He kept armed retainers, trained soldiers, and took

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

the title Sacha Padshah (True Emperor). This title had been used of God by Guru Arjan in a hymn in the Adi Granth, (p. 1426).

'My friend is the Emperor. He is king over the heads of kings.'

According to Khushwant Singh he may have used this title of himself honorifically.[5] The Sikhs tell a story that once, when Hargobind was at the camp of Jahangir a man came looking for the padshah and was directed by the emperor to the Guru.

During the Guruship of Har Rai the Emperor Aurangzeb summoned the Guru to his court at Delhi, suspecting him of aiding Dara Shikoh his eldest brother. Instead the eldest son of the Guru went. Ram Rai was asked to defend a certain passage in the Adi Granth which reads

'The ashes of the Muslim fall into the potter's clod. Pots and bricks are made from them: they cry out as they burn.' (p. 466)

The verse dealt with the issue of cremation or burial. The answer was that the choice was not very important, the Muslim buried in good ground and potters valued the clay of cemeteries highly. Therefore, the Muslim practice was merely deferred cremation.

Instead of the offending 'mitti Mussulman ki' ('the ashes of the Muslim'), Ram Rai said the true reading was 'Mitti beiman ki' ('the ashes of a dishonest man'). The Emperor was satisfied but not the Guru. The Scripture was incapable of error and could not be changed. The episode cost Ram Rai the Guruship which passed to his five year old brother. This incident discloses a concern for accuracy which goes back at least to the time when Arjan compiled the Adi Granth in 1604 and possibly to the collection of Nanak's hymns by Guru Angad. It persists today in the orthodox Sikh charge that Namdharis misquote the Scriptures and the Namdhari reluctance to accept translations, an attitude common to the whole community until Trumpp began his translation in the nineteenth century.

The story has been told of the rival claimants to the Guru's gaddi on the death of Har Krishen. Perhaps it was consciousness of this and the politically critical times which encouraged Guru Gobind Singh to produce his alternatives to the human Guru, the Khalsa Panth and the Guru Granth.

Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Since the time of Hargobind there had been soldiers among the Sikhs and the tenth Guru's establishment of the militant, uniformed Khalsa in 1699 was, in a sense, merely the completion of a process. However, it had another, more significant aspect. When the Guru had initiated the first five members he was made the sixth by them.

The Adi Granth frequently described Guru Nanak as 'the slave of the saints' and Guru Arjan wrote "unto the society of the saints I ever make obeisance" (p. 183), in a sense there was no innovation when Guru Gobind Singh said "the Khalsa is my other self, in it I live and move and have my being."

During his lifetime the Khalsa was under his command, but theoretically it was a democratic arm present and able to operate wherever there were five Khalsa Sikhs (panj pyare). It was therefore able to respond to the needs of guerilla warfare in the next century where small forces mobile, able to disappear and reorganise quickly were essential and where a centralised command might prove an impediment.

Guru Gobind Singh's other change catered for this need but above all it lifted the spirituality of Sikhism out of political and personal concern and gave an autonomy which, in theory, it had always possessed. Before his death at Nander in 1708 he installed the Adi Granth as Guru and made obeisance to it. He had no direct Sodhi successor, his sons had died in the disturbances which marked most of his life. Worse rivalry than that which preceded the accession of Tegh Bahadur could be expected and, in addition, the Guru was a marked man, inextricably involved in politics. He therefore separated the temporal (Khalsa Panth) and the spiritual (Guru Granth Sahib) and it was for history to determine the political evolution.

The Khalsa Panth lies outside the scope of this study but not the Guru Panth, the corporate community of Sikhs meeting in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib. These Sikhs were the leaders of the twelve misls into which the Khalsa was divided. Just as Guru Har Rai had certainly debated with leading Sikhs how to respond to Aurangzab and had sent Ram Rai so the misaldars met around the book and made decisions believing them to be the will of the Guru and issued ordinances (Hukam) as the human Gurus had. Ranjit Singh was one of these misaldars. Under his strong rule the meetings of the Guru Panth became less

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

frequent and with the annexation of the Punjab by the British the theory of 1708 and reality became one.

To avert any threat to his authority the Sikh Maharaja brought to an end the Guru panth as a political institution but of course he did not envisage the total loss of Sikh control of the Punjab which eventually took place. The consequence was that Sikhism found itself without an overall organisation. During the nineteenth and early twentieth century some Sikhs became Christian, others reverted to Hinduism, especially under the aggressive influence of the Arya Samaj movement which followed Christian missionaries into the Punjab. Historic gurdwaras were frequently in the hands of families which were Hindu or Udasi[6] and controlled by hereditary Mahants.[7] In accordance with the spirit of the age, provoked perhaps by Christianity and the Hindu and Muslim self-assertive movements the Sikhs also began agitation, in the form of the Namdharis[8] of Ram Singh but also in the akali movement, that part of the Singh Sabha movement devoted to gurdwara reform. The word Akali means purification. The agitation of fifty years or more bore fruit in 1925 in the form of the Gurdwara Act. This restored Gurdwaras to Sikh control and also set up a governing body, the Shromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. This is a body elected by Sikhs in the Punjab and responsible to the government of India, However, it emerged as a political solution to a problem which was regarded as political and it has not been matched by a similar body meeting the needs of Sikhs elsewhere. Although each country where Sikhs live may have a Central Committee there is no overall world Sikh organisation and although the S.G.P.C. is held in universal respect, nevertheless about a fifth of the panth, from the Khalsa peach-growers of California to the stall holders of Castleford market (U.K.) are disenfranchised. ?

In matters of faith and doctrine the four granthis of the Akal Takht (Amritsar), and gurdwaras at Anandpur, Patna and Nander are regarded as authorities. For this purpose they are appointed by the S. G. P. C. However, the present state of Sikhism is one of incomplete organisation. At the time of writing this does not seem to be a matter of concern, perhaps it will be as the influence of non-punjabi domiciled Sikhs grows and as the faith becomes increasingly conscious of itself as a world religion. Of course, it may be argued that Islam has no central authority, that Judaism, numerically not much

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

larger than Sikhism lacks one and that the centralised authority of Christianity, in the form of the Papacy was rejected. Therefore, it might be argued, Sikhism will not regard the incompleteness of its organisation seriously. Against this one can only point out that the belief in a community gathered around the Guru is a fundamental tenet of the Sikh religion and that Sikhism has been overtaken by events to such an extent that for the last 170 years this ideal has not been a political reality. One suspects that this is not only contrary to the teachings of the faith but also to the nature of Sikhs and that one day they will do something about it.

Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

A Study of the Sabads of the Gurus.

The writings examined in this section will be the sixty-two hymns of Guru Angad, the nine hundred and seven of Amar Das, the six hundred and seventy nine of Ram Das, the two thousand - two hundred and eighteen of Arjan, the Guru who authorised the compilation of the Adi Granth, the one hundred and sixteen of his grandson, Guru Tegh Bahadur, and the smallest number, just over a hundred, composed by Hindu bards at the court of the Gurus. The works of Kabir, Namdev and the other pre-Nanak bhagats will not be included. Their hymns were chosen partly because they conformed to the beliefs of the Sikh community. One would not expect them, therefore, to contribute to the development of later Sikh thought however much they influenced Guru Nanak. Also, the possibility that these compositions were modified by the Sikhs in the interests of conformity cannot be disregarded. The critical examination of this issue lies outside the terms of this present study and would in any case be difficult. The hymns of Kabir which are found in the Adi Granth do not exist elsewhere. Though these can be compared with other hymns not included in the Sikh scriptures it is not possible to do this with the works of Namdev and Farid for example as they are known almost exclusively from what is contained in the Adi Granth.

The quantity of material is enormous but the number of ideas contained in it is small and as one would expect with devotional hymns there is considerable repetition. The religious poet does not necessarily seek to be original and the compilers, Angad, Arjan and finally Guru Gobind Singh, believed that they were preserving the divine word. Therefore, they had no more right to be selective in what they assembled than they had to change what they received or to remain silent when a word was given them to speak.

The beliefs expressed by Guru Nanak were reiterated by his successors.

Guru Amar Das probably had the Mool Mantra consciously in mind when he wrote,

> "My Master is eternal. He is seen by practising
> Nam meditation. He is never perishable and neither
> he is born nor does he die. Ever and ever serve him
> who is contained amongst all.
> Why serve another second who is born and then dies?" (p. 509).

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

In a similar way a Pauri of Guru Arjan begins

"Unlineal, immaculate, omnipotent,
unapproachable and infinite is the Lord.
Truly, the true lord is seen to be the truest
of the true." (A.G. p. 518).

The fourth Guru, Ram Das, wrote at least two similar doxologies.

"The supreme lord is unperceivable
Say, how is one to attain him.
He has no form or feature and is unseen
How then can one dwell upon him?
He is formless, immaculate and unknowable
Of which of his attributes, then, shall we sing?" (p. 604).

"O thou, the person on high
The purest of the pure,
Infinite and unfathomable,
O thou, the creator,
All worship thee, all bow to thee." (p. 448)

The inadequacy of the smarta tradition and varnashram dharma was reiterated at least as strong by his successors as by Nanak himself.

Whenever caste is mentioned among Sikhs someone will repeat the words of the third Guru,

"Be not proud of thy caste,
O unwise man be not proud of thy caste,
For a myriad errors flow from this pride;
The same clay fashions the whole world,
The same clay the potter moulds into vessels of all kinds." (p. 1128)

Guru Nanak had said that talking about God and reading 'a load' of religious books had no saving worth, Guru Arjan was even more sweeping.

"By the reading of holy books, by controlling
breath and cleansing the inner system by
yogic exercises, one cannot get rid of
the five impulses. On the contrary, one becomes
more and more conceited.
One may worship and make flower-offerings
to the gods and may lie prostrate as a log before them,
and perform the six karmas as mentioned in
the shastras, but the fetters of egoism do not
become loosened. Rather they become tighter
yet God is not attained." (A.G. p. 641).

Belief in the immanence of God and the consequent worthlessness of the ascetic forest life persisted through the period of the Gurus and is no less important to Tegh Bahadur than it was to Guru Nanak.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

> "Why dost thou go to the forest in search of God? He lives in all and yet is ever distinct. He abides with thee too, his fragrance dwells in a flower and reflection in a mirror, so God dwells in everything. See him, therefore, in thine heart." (p. 684).

Parallels to these quotations can be found on almost every page of the Guru Granth Sahib. More important than listing them is the task of seeking changes, developments and innovations in the concept of guruship. In the hymns of the Gurus evidence of innovation is lacking. There seems to be no idea which is not there in embryo at least in the bani of Guru Nanak. This is not to deny that his successors may have particular insights to contribute. These will be examined later. First, however, a few changes in emphasis must be noted.

Guru Nanak said little about formal worship and conduct. His main utterance was contained in the Japji, pauri 4:

> "Early in the morning, meditate upon the eternal name."

Not surprisingly the practices of nam simran and nam japa, calling the divine name to mind and repeating it received further treatment in the course of time. So Guru Ram Das, who tightened Sikh discipline wrote,

> "He who calls himself a disciple of the true Guru, let him rise at an early hour before dawn and meditate on Nam the all-pervading divine spirit. Let him bath and make an effort to cleanse his mind in the inner tank of nectar. Let him repeat the name of the lord as taught by the Guru. This will wash away the stain of sins from his mind. When the sun rises, let him sing the hymns of the Guru and throughout the busy day discipline his mind to live consciously in the presence of God. He who constantly remembers God, the lord, such a disciple (sikh) is indeed dear to the Guru." (A. G. p. 305).

It is as difficult as it was with the hymns of Guru Nanak to discover passages which refer unambiguously to a human Guru. The following, mentioned here in the context of the discipline of the community would seem to be one such example.

> "The disciple, who liveth in the Guru's fold, should submit to his will and commandment, not feel proud of what he does. He should meditate ever on the Lord's name. Yea, he who surrenders his mind to

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

> the Guru, such a servant hath his desires fulfilled. He who serveth without desire or reward, he alone attains the lord."
>
> (Guru Arjan A.G. p. 286).

Guru Nanak probably owed much to the company of holy men, perhaps for a time being associated with such a group until his belief in the inwardness of God, 'at home' (i.e. in the body) led him to assert the 'at home' (i.e. grhastha) way of life in the service of God. Valuing this company he established a community and in the writings of his successors 'the saints' becomes a phrase almost as common as the words 'nam' and 'Guru'. 'Saints' used in this way is attributable to Guru Nanak, with the passage of time the references become more frequent, the community also comes to possess a new importance, scarely less than that of the Guru himself.

The Company or Community of Saints, (sangat).

Guru Nanak's encounter with the yogis, described in the hymn Sidda Gosht (p. 938 - 946) opens with the 'men of miracles' seated in assembly commanding Nanak, 'Make thou salutation to this assembly of saints' (sant sabha). This is perhaps the first important use of the expression in the Adi Granth. It does not come from the lips of the Guru who seldom refers to the company of saints, but from the Nath yogis to whom he was probably greatly indebted. Though they might leave their meeting place at Achal for a time to beg in the towns and villages or meditate alone yet they seem to have formed a society which possessed some permanence. This community may well have influenced the Guru to weld his followers into a permanent, though householder, company of saints. His own usage indicates where he considered the value of fellowship to lie. 'Man becomes good in good company' (p. 414), 'the company of those who cherish the True Lord within, turns mortals into holy beings.' (p. 228). The word used in both examples is sangat,[10] which Sikhs use nowadays to describe their worshipping congregation or the community in general.

The references of the second Guru to the saints are also few but already one is aware of an important change in stress.

Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

'Through the society of saints, (sangat) where
the Lord's praises are ever uttered, union
with him is obtained.
Nanak, by praising the True Lord one comes
to realise the Lord's truth.' (p. 1280).

The sangat is now more than a godly fellowship, it seems to possess a guru-attribute, the ability to enable someone who joins it to achieve union with God.

The third Guru combines the ideas of Nanak and Angad in one of his verses:

'He whom the Lord himself inbues meets the
guild of the saints. From the perfect Guru
the guild of saints is obtained and man easily
embraces the glorious love of the true one.
Without the society of the righteous all men
remain like beasts and animals.' (p. 427)

Much more explicit and significant is the contribution of Guru Ram Das. His predecessor had organised the Sikhs into twenty-two manjis[11] or administrative districts and community consciousness was now well-developed. A relationship with the Emperor Akbar was developing which must have encouraged the young community to see itself having an important future in the religious life of India. They were taught that their meeting with the Guru-God was pre-ordained (p. 449), the writ being placed on their foreheads since the beginning of time (p. 450), that the dishonourable among them were thereby honoured, and that they were robed in the divine court. (p. 451). The sangat had become a haven from death,

'He who obtains not the sangat of the True Guru,
he, the unfortunate sinner, is devoured by death's
courier.' (p. 494)

The Guru saw himself as their servant who could receive blessing and wisdom from them.

'I am the slave and serf of the Guru's sikhs who
night and day meditate on the omnipotent Lord God.
Within my heart and body I have imbibed love for
the feet of the Guru's sikhs.
You are friends of my very life, Guru sikhs,
my brothers. Impart instruction to me. United
by you I can meet the Lord.' (p. 493/494).

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

In the attitude of Guru Arjan to the sangat there is something paradoxical. With him the Sodhi dynasty becomes established. (He was the son of the fourth Guru, grandson of the third, father of the sixth and all the later Gurus were directly descended from him). However, in his hymns the importance of the community is stressed to a degree equalled only by Guru Gobind Singh.

In a passage in which he tells of the difficulties the god-like Brahma and the hermits[12] Sanak, Sanatan and Sant Kumar have in attaining the Lord's presence he continues,

> 'now I have obtained the society of the saints
> I shall not be born again.' (p. 401)

The theme of the righteous society of saints (sat sangat) or saintly congregation (sat sagat) is such a prominent theme in the hymns of the fifth Guru that many examples could be given from the wealth of material. There is one lengthy passage which epitomises his teaching.

> 'Showing his mercy, when the Lord yokes man to the service of the saints, he merges him, in the Lord through the sangat.
> Through the saints' society the Lord abides in the mortal's mind. Through the congress of the saints all sins flee away. In the society of the saints, one acquires the immaculate way of life. Through the saints' congreation one comes to embrace love of the one Lord. That alone is called the saints' guild where only the praises of the transcendent Lord (parabrahm) are sung. By the saints' society one is rid of birth and death. Through the saints' society death's courier touches no one. In the society of the saints one's speech (bani) becomes immaculate (nirmal). In the saints' society he utters the Lord's name. Ever stable is the abode of the saints' build. Sins are destroyed in the saints' congregation. In the saints' congregation the pure discourse of God is narrated. Through the saints' society the ailment of egotism flees away. The society of the saints are not destroyed. In the guild of saints the treasure of God's virtue abides. The saints' congreation is the abiding-place of the Lord Master.
> Nanak, the Lord is woven with his saints like warp and woof.' (p. 1146)

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

One important metaphor is not to be found in this shabad. Frequently Guru Nanak described the Guru or the Gurbani as the boat or ferryman through whom, alone, the world-ocean could be crossed.

> 'As the lotus thrusts upwards and does
> not drown in water, as the duck swims
> and does not become wet while swimming;
> so we, safely and unaffectedly, cross the
> world-ocean by attuning our minds to the
> word of the Guru and repeating the holy
> name of God.' (p. 938)

This metaphor Guru Arjan applies to the sangat elsewhere.

> 'Joining the sangat cross thou the
> difficult and dreadful world ocean.' (p. 519)

The ninth Guru adds nothing to the teachings of his grandfather about the sangat. In Arjan's hymns the highest point before Guru Gobind Singh's inauguration of the Khalsa has been reached. The community of the saints is the means of attaining faith and overcoming or avoiding the agony of despair (p. 405), through it the five mortal sins[13] are crushed, the love of divine knowledge is awakened, the sleeping soul becomes God-conscious and God himself is attained. (p. 380). In one passage, at least, the gurprasad of the Mool Mantra is replaced by sant prasad.

> 'By the grace of the saints (sant prasad)
> everything has turned out well.
> I have met him, the fearless master,
> whose house is brimful with all the things.' (p. 389)

Under Hargobind Guruship was to take a political and militaristic turn. The anticipation of this development may be seen not only in his inspiration of the community with the belief that they were an embodiment of the Guru but also in his emphatic description of the Guru as King of Kings, Sacha Padshah. This title his son firmly annexed and by doing so, as has been noted, appeared to the Moguls as a political rival.

> 'The Lord becomes manifest in the sangat
> and him the saints (bhagat) contemplate day
> and night with love.
> By giving he does not exhaust his treasures.
> In an instant he establishes and disestablishes.
> No one can deny his writ (hukam).
> He, the Lord (Sri) is King of Kings (Padshah sacha).

But this is not all. In one of his hymns Guru Arjan catches up the sangat in a vast eternal vision of the God whom he found 'within the mind',

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

as Lord of the three worlds. He describes this Lord as the one countless sages (munis) seek, on whom millions of Brahmas meditate, and millions of avatars of Vishna and Siva desire. He is infinite and inaccessible though served by millions of gods and goddesses in a variety of ways. The stars and moon remember him, the sky and earth sing his praises. In the middle of this hymn, reminiscent of Job 28, there occurs the brief statement,

> 'Meeting the society of saints, O Nanak, salvation is attained and the compassionate and beloved world-Lord (Govind) is found.' (p. 455)

The section closes with the words,

> 'We are all beggars. Thou alone art the giver.
> Thou art not remote, rather thou art manifest
> in the sangat.
> Thou art the power of thy devoted slaves. How
> can I recount the praise of those mortals who
> meet thee?
> May Nanak[14] obtain this boon and the honour
> of placing his head on the saints' feet.' (p. 456).

Little wonder that this Chhant is followed by the Slok,

> 'Make effort, fortunate ones, meditate on
> the Lord God, the King (Har Rai).
> Nanak, by remembering him you shall
> have peace and your troubles, doubts and
> pains shall disappear.'

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Gurbani or sabad-guru.

Both bani and sabad are words used by Guru Nanak and may be regarded as synonymous as the following examples show.

> 'None has encompassed thy bounds so how can I describe thee with a single tongue? He who meditates on thy true sabad is joined in union with thee.
> ... The Guru's sabad is like a (sparkling) gem which reveals thee by its light. One understands one's own self and through the Guru's instruction merges with the truth.' [15] (p. 1290).

> 'Beauteous is the Guru's bani, meditating upon which man attains to God.' (p. 936)

Sabda-brahman, the causal word, is a phrase used in ancient Indian thought to represent supreme divinity. [16] It is related to the belief that the cosmos is the expression of an idea, the utterance of a thought. Pursuing this line further one reaches the monosyllable Om, the ultimate causal word, the first manifestation of articulate language, the seed of all speech, the meaning of all wisdom. The vedas are merely commentaries upon this sound. [17] In the Mandukya Upanishad [18] Om is described as, 'the one eternal syllable of which all that exists is but the development.' In the Bhagavadgita [19] Krishna says,

> 'Om is the one indestructible sound, the immensity. He who, his mind intent on me, abandons his body and leaves the world uttering this syllable attains the pure purpose of his destiny.'

In yoga of the nath variety sabda was regarded as anahata or anahad, which means unstruck. It had a spiritual existence (like Om before its manifestation in the vedas), but it only became awakened when, through natha-yoga technique the kundalini [20] had been awakened, and had ascended to the susumna [21] or paramsiva.

In Sikh thought yogic technique has been superseded by the Guru. He manifests the eternal sound and the one favoured by the Guru-God hears the eternal word. In Sikhism sabad is not a mystical sound it is the word of revelation. It becomes revelation itself. Not surprisingly Sikhs are happy to compare it with the Logos of the Fourth Gospel of the Christian Bible.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

As the example given at the beginning of this chapter suggests, sabad-guru and gur-bani seem to be interchangeable terms in the utterances of Guru Nanak. With his successors, however, the word gurbani becomes the more popular of the two and may frequently be translated 'hymn' having in mind not only the content but also the form. The Gurbani as pre-existent to and superior to the human Guru may already be in the mind of Nanak's successor in a passage in which he refers to it as a jewel and then proceeds to allude to the nine body openings important in yoga.

> 'The bag of jewels, the Guru, the jeweller has come and opened. The Gurbani, the bag of jewels, remains merged in the minds both of the Guru, the Vendor of the commodity and the sikh, the vendee. They alone who have virtue in the skirt, O Nanak, purchase the Name jewel. They who know not the work of the Gurbani and the name ~~Nander~~ like are blind men in the world. The body fortress has nine doors, the tenth is kept unseen. The adamantine shutters of the tenth gate open not. Only through the Guru's word (Gur-sabad) do they open. The melodious strain rings there. By Gur-Sabad it is heard. The divine light shines in the mind of those who hear the music of the tenth gate. Such persons meet God by embracing meditation (bhagti). The one Lord who has himself made the world is contained amongst all. ' (p. 954).

The fourth Guru, Ram Das, implicitly equates Gurbani and Guru

> 'The Gurbani of the Satguru is the embodiment of truth. Through the Gurbani, the mortal becomes perfect. ' (p. 305).

In another place the equation is made explicit.

> 'The Gurbani is the Guru and the Guru is the Gurbani. In the Gurbani are all the nectars. If the attendant (i. e. the one who waves the chauri) acts as the Gurbani enjoins, the Guru himself saves him. (p. 982).

While the emphasis throughout the period of the ten Gurus was upon the living word, the teachings, the Sabad-Guru, nevertheless a literature was emerging and it was probably the collection of Nanak's hymns which Guru Ram Das described as the 'embodiment of truth' (sarupa) in the passage quoted above. Comparison with the Vedas and the Qur'an was almost inevitable. There was a need to work out a

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

relationship between the Gurbani and these other scriptures.

Guru Angad was already aware of this when he wrote:

> 'The Vedas have brought legends and tales and they expound vice and virtue. What man gives freely they receive and what he receives freely they give. According to their deeds men are born in hell or in heaven. The ambrosial Gurbani speaks of the real thing and has been revealed to the Guru in divine knowledge and meditation. The Guru-words (i.e. Guru-minded as opposed to worldly-minded, Gurmukh not manmukh) utter it, realise it, and by God's grace sages ponder over it.' (p. 1244).

Here the Guru seems to be adding a commentary to some words of Nanak's which follow and in which he states that the Vedas lay down the principle that as a man sows so he reaps, that he eats the fruits of his deeds. He then continues adding that the 'Vedas is but a trader. The soul's capital stock is only the comprehension of the Lord which is obtained through the Guru's grace.' The Vedas have no intrinsic value, but the Guru has, and therefore so has the Gurbani according to the second Guru. One is invited to conclude that the Gurbani is superior to the Vedas.

The fourth Guru, Ram Das occasionally expresses concern about those who slander the Sat Guru or disobey his word. By his time Sikhism had its schismatic movements which were too strong to be neglected. Reference will be made to them later in this chapter, meanwhile however, one of his hymns places the Gurbani in this context as well as that of the Vedas.

> 'He who avows not his Guru publicly is not a good man. He loses all his capital and profit, O saints.
> Nanak, previously the mortals recited and preached the Shastras and Vedas, but the Gurbani has descended from the Perfect Guru as the most exalted of all. The magnification of the Perfect Guru is pleasing to the Sikhs of the Guru. The perverse have not that opportunity.' (p. 304).

It may be recalled that the first part of this quotation was mentioned in Chapter One as being used by Sikhs to argue that if Nanak had possessed a human guru he would have named him. However, the words would seem to

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

refer partly to those tempted to follow Prithia Chand, his eldest son who coveted the office of guru [22] but even more to Hindus it attempted to remain within the Hindu fold but also enjoy the benefits of Sikhism. [23] They are told that the Gurbani has superseded their scriptures. This is not to deny any value to the vedic tradition. The spirit of Sikhism has always tended to be that expressed by Guru Amar Das,

> 'True is the Lord's word, and true is his Gurbani. In every age holy persons (gurmukh) utter it.' (p. 424)

The Gurus do not deny the worth of sacred books not only because they were consciously occupied in producing one. They do not deny that God may be found within Islam or Hinduism. The true emphasis in Sikhism is upon the awakening of the spirit and for this to happen the grace of the Sat Guru is needed. Therefore Guru Arjan can claim,

> 'I have not practised the recitation of religious books, penance, austerity and rituals, but have only remembered the Lord's name in my mind.'

This he described as the rosary (mala) of God's name (p. 388). Elsewhere he does not mention sacred books but he does assert that nam simran (meditation upon God's name) contains within itself worship, penance and various rituals. (p. 502). Theologically, the idea is one of comprehensiveness and universalism. In this respect the view of Amar Das is never bettered - or contradicted:

> 'Gurbani is the divine light in the world. Through the Guru's grace it comes to abide in mortal minds. ...
> ... Namdev the calico printer and Kabir the weaver obtained salvation from the perfect Guru. By recognising his name they became knowers of God and lost their egoism and caste.
> ... Prahlad, [24] the demon's son, did not read of religious rites and austerities and knew not duality. On meeting the True Guru he became pure and uttered God's name day and night.
> ... The followers of the six schools of philosophy, yogis and solitaries have gone astray in doubt without the Guru. ... With the True Gurbani their minds are fixed, their comings and goings cease.
> ... By reading and study brahmins set afoot

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

> controversies and without the Guru they go amiss in sceptism. ... When they remember the Name and when the True Guru unites them with the Lord's union then they attain emancipation.' (p. 67).

To coin a phrase one might say the sabad-guru came not to destroy but to fulfil. The equation between the Guru and the gurbani has already been noted. Guru Amar Das expressed another, perhaps even more significant

> 'The Lord himself is the Vedas, Puranas, and all the Shastras. He himself utters them and is pleased. He, the creator sits down to worship and himself creates the world. He is a householder and a renouncer. He utters the unutterable.' (p. 551).

When, in the time of Guru Arjan a clear break with Hinduism and Islam was apparently accepted (though the lines between Sikhism and Hinduism have always been blurred in practice) the separation with its rejection of practices never extended to a denial of the scriptures. In the famous lines quoted in the last chapter in which Guru Arjan turned from Hindu and Muslims fasts, pilgrimages and prayer forms he was commenting on verses attributed to Kabir

> 'My body and soul belong to him who is called Allah of the Muslims and Ram of the Hindus.'

Guru Arjan added

> 'Thus says Kabir. I express it this way; meeting with the pir - guru I have realised my Lord.' (p. 1136).

Only a few pages further on (p. 1139) the same Guru wrote

> 'I have seen the Lord in the woods, in vegetation, in the home and in udasis. I have seen him among those who carry staves and those with matted hair, those who fast, vow-takers and pilgrims. I have seen him in the satsang and within my mind. In the sky and air I find him all-pervading. With love and bliss I sing his praise.
> I have seen the Lord among yogis, sects and solitaries, wandering saints, celibates and patched-coat wearers; among penitents, austere men, silent sages, actors and dancers.
> I have seen him in the four vedas, the six shastras, the ten and eight puranas and the twenty-seven smirtis.
> These all ... declare that the Lord is but one.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Guru Nanak perceived an ultimate unity so that he could see God at work in each of the four ages (p. 79), could describe him as the creator of air, water, fire, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva (p. 504) and say 'Amongst yogis thou art a yogi and among revellers a reveller (p. 71). This vision of unity has prevented Sikhs denying that the truth is present in religions other than their own. However, it also led to their rejection of sectarian practices which denied this unitary principle. Sikhism itself, of course, has not remained unattached to such practices (for example adherence to the five Ks, the turban, to a large degree endogamy, and the exclsuion of scriptures other than the Adi Granth and the Dasam Granth from the Gurdwara). These developments belong to a later time and different historical circumstances. It might be well here to end with a reminder that in his collection called the Adi Granth Guru Arjan included Muslim and Hindu writings with his own and those of Nanak, Amar Das and Ram Das.

Personal Guruship.

Between the time of Guru Nanak and the accession of Guru Gobind Singh, a matter of just under one-hundred and forty years, a society grew to maturity, a sacred literature was assembled and each of these, as has been seen had an influence upon the concept of Guruship. Each shifted the emphasis from the person to the satsang, from the human being to the words assembled in a book, the gurbani. It would be surprising if, in this period personal guruship had not been affected.

On the evidence of the Guru Granth Sahib it was, in a number of ways.

There were schisms especially when the sons of Guru Nanak were passed over in favour of Angad and when Guru Ram Das chose his youngest son Arjan rather than the others. There was also the Handali movement, a group taking their name from a pious follower of Guru Ram Das but really founded by his son Bidhi Chand. With his own Granth and Janam sakhis he attempted to give greater importance to his father and less to Guru Nanak whom he described as a disciple of Kabir. 26

It is probably in this context of schism that a hymn of Guru Angad's is to be read in which he says

> 'obey thou him who is worthy of obedience.
> By the Guru's grace the Lord is realised.
> ---He alone who is blind follows the road
> shown by the blind one ... they alone are
> blind who stray from their Lord ...
> Where God, the real being is not seen there
> self deceit prevails ... The Lord is known
> through the Guru's service and his truth becomes
> manifest. ' (p. 954).

Service (sewa) characterised Guru Angad. It was his humility which earned him the guruship in preference to Nanak's own ascetic son Sri Chand and his proud brother Lakhmi Chand.

A similar group would seem to be in the mind of the third Guru as he describes the way-ward who live in the pain of doubt, who are asleep in duality,

> 'They think not of the name and do not ponder
> on the sabad-guru. This is the conduct of
> perverse persons. They do not attain God's
> name and waste their life vainly. Death's
> courier punishes and dishonours them. ' (p. 509).

There are many references in the Adi Granth to those who wander through no fault of their own and who transmigrate as simple victims of the law of Karma but these two sections seem to refer to the wilfully mistaken, the stubborn who have chosen not to follow the Guru.

Guru Ram Das is completely explicit when he says,

> 'He who heartily adores the Guru's being obtains
> boons and heart's desires. Who slanders the
> perfect True Guru, him the creator destroys. ..
> He who does not obey the perfect Guru's order
> is perverse and robbed by ignorance and poisonous
> mammon. ... Those turned Guru-wards keep
> aloof from him. They leave his association and
> sit near the Guru.
> He who does not avow his Guru publicly is not a
> good person. He loses his capital and profit,
> o saints. ' (p. 307/308).

The words cannot be attached to a particular incident or sectarian movement but clearly the guruship of Ram Das has been questioned. The existence of some rival Guru is openly stated by Ram Das in the same section of the Adi Granth.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

'In an attempt to emulate the Sat Guru some others utter filth, bad and good sermons, but because of falsehood they are soon devastated. In their heart is one thing, in their mouth quite another. They hanker after and pine away for poisonous wealth. ... They who have deceit, wickedness and falsehood in their minds, those lepers the True Lord separates away.
The true Sikhs sit beside their guru and serve him. The false ones find no place even though they search. They to whom the words of the Sat guru are not agreeable, accursed are their countenances. Condemned by God they wander about.' (p. 304/305).

One other observation by Guru Ram Das must be mentioned, one which seems to suggest an attempt to manipulate the satsang for motives of self-interest as Prithia Chand, his eldest son is reputed to have done.

'The Guru's disciple shall not again draw near him who desires to have some work done by the sikhs without the True Guru's order.' (p. 317).

Though the authority of the Gurus was being questioned and challenged by unsuccessful aspirants its prestige was growing steadily and at all times considerably. This was one reason for jealousy of course. The manner in which one future Guru, Ram Das, could speak of the living Guru Amar Das can possibly be seen in these words.

'He who gives me the message of my Lord God; to him I offer my soul and body.
I daily wave the fan over him, perform his service and carry water for him.
Ever, ever I serve God's serf who recites to me the discourse of God.
Hail, hail unto the Guru, the great perfect Sat Guru who fulfils the desire of Nanak's heart.'

In these lines is respect stopping short of worship which is confined to the Satguru in the last sentence. Earlier Ram Das speaks of his utter devotion to Amar Das but calls him 'God's serf' and indicates that his respect is because Amar Das utters the discourse of the Lord. The Guru is respected for his message rather than his person.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

The above exegesis might not win the approval of all Sikhs for it depends upon the view that a person could utter an inspired word (gurbani) before becoming Guru. However, there is a well authenticated and universally accepted example of this which might be quoted here. Guru Ram Das wished his eldest son Prithia Chand to represent him at a wedding in Lahore. The son excused himself and eventually his brother Arjan went. He remained for some months and finally sent a verse message to his father seeking permission to return. This was intercepted by Prithia Chand who wanted Arjan out of the way as his father was old and might soon confer the guruship on a successor. Only after three such messages had been sent did Guru Ram Das learn the truth and summon his son to return.[27] This story provides an example of gurbani produced before a person had become Guru but presumably accepted because he became Guru. It also gives another insight into how a future Guru saw his own human Guru.

He compares himself to a chatrick or pied cuckoo, a bird traditionally ever searching for water, and says his thirst is not quenched and there is no peace without sight of the holy Guru.

In the second stanza he addresses his father as divine Guru, and auspicious Lord, (bhagavat). In the third he longs to return to the Guru's court (darbar). Finally, back home he completed the poem at his father's request,

> 'It is my good fortune to have met the holy Guru. The immortal Lord I have found in my own home.' (p. 97).

Throughout this hymn the language is such as is frequently used of the Sat Guru and were it not for this tradition which accompanies it there would be no way of saying that it was addressed to Arjan's father. Significantly, the word 'father' does not occur, the human relationship being superseded by that of guru and chela.

The aspirations of the Sikhs during that Golden Age when Akbar ruled the Mogul Empire and Arjan was Guru were almost without limit. They were favoured and the future seemed to be theirs. The fulfilment of hope in the realisation of a wonderful destiny is to be found in the hymn which Arjan composed on the birth of his son, a son he named

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Har Gobind, world-lord, a name which surely spoke of his father's belief in the course history was taking.

> 'The true Sat Guru has sent the child. The long-lived child has been born by destiny. When he came and acquired an abode in the womb his mother's heart became very glad.
> The son, the saint of the world-lord (Gobind) is born. The primal writ has become manifest amongst all.' (p. 396).

Arjan's position was weak at the time. He had no son. Prithia Chand, already mentioned, was on hand to assume guruship. Now the dynasty was safe.

> 'The vine has extended and shall last for many generations. The Lord has firmly established the machinery of devotion and love.'

28 A number of stories reminiscent of Krishna mythology are told about the childhood of Har Gobind. A wet nurse smeared her nipples with poison at the instruction of Prithia Chand. A cobra was put near the baby but he strangled it. These add to the belief that this child was the hope of the age.

However, the inclination to see the Gurus as avatars was carefully and persistently resisted by the Gurus themselves. So vehement were the protestations, though few in number, that it is clear that the Gurus felt a need to discourage a tendency among their followers. To some extent this was done by emphasising the importance of the sat sangat and its equality with the Guru. The growth in significance of the gurbani must also have helped. Both these points have already been discussed.

There was also a modesty of utterance found still in Guru Arjan as it had been in Nanak.

> 'As thou causest me to speak, so do I speak, O master. Otherwise what power have I to speak?' (p. 509).

Fairly typical is the statement of Guru Amar Das. The Sat Guru 'is invisible and cannot be seen .. he neither comes nor goes.' (p. 592).

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

It is left to Guru Arjan, however, to make the final pronouncement.

> 'Keeping aside all other lunar days, thou sayest he was born on the eighth day of the moon. Man led astray by doubt does false things. Without birth and death, is he, the omnipresent Lord. ... He, the Lord is not born, nor does he die. ... Burnt be that mouth which says the Lord enters into existences. He is not born, nor dies he. He comes not and goes not. The Lord of Nanak is pervading everywhere.' (p. 1136)

Not only is the concept of avatar or any other belief in God assuming physical form denied, the humanity of the human Guru is asserted as much by later Gurus as it was by Nanak.

The third Guru could say of himself,

> 'O my mind! thou art filled with the dirt of egotism (haumai).' (p. 35).

Guru Arjan, responsible for so much of the sikh vision of greatness was equally self-deprecating.

> 'I have sought the refuge of the saints' society and my mind longs for the dust of their feet. I know not the way, nor do I have any virtue. It is very difficult to escape from mammon. Nanak has come and fallen at the Guru's feet and then all his evil desires are annulled.' (p. 533/534).

He also said,

> 'As thou causest me to speak. So do I speak O my master. What other power do I have to speak?' (p. 507).

Very little has been said of Guru Tegh Bahadur in this section. His hymns are few and mostly devotional. His place in Sikhism is not as one who developed concepts but that of a man who courageously held to the faith in times of difficulty, eventually dying for it. In a startlingly frank verse he referred to being involved with someone else's wife and being given to slander, ?

> 'How should I describe my deeds - the way I have wasted my life? Says Nanak, in me are all demerits. Save thou me O Lord. I have entered thy sanctuary.' (p. 1232).

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Evolution, not revolution seems to be the term appropriate to the concept of Guru as it developed in the hands of Nanak's eight successors. Perhaps after Guru Arjan its modesty was preserved by the unexpected, though not unpredictable, hostility which was allowed free rein after Akbar's death. Consequently the Sachapadshah Har Gobind upon whom Arjan had placed such hopes could eventually be succeeded by his twice rejected son the pious Tegh Bahadur. ?

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

The Concept of Guru in the Compositions of Bards whose Writings are included in the Guru Granth Sahib.

In addition to the shabads of the Gurus, excluding the sixth, seventh, eighth and tenth, and the works of pre-Nanak bhagats, the Adi Granth contains a number of compositions by bards of the time of Guru Arjan. These men were part of his retinue and adornments of his court. They must have contributed to the ethos of temporal royalty which was growing steadily during the guruship of Arjan and became most pronounced under his successor and later in the days of the tenth Guru.

The most clearly or completely Sikh of these poets was Bhai Gurdas whose ode (Var) to Guru Nanak was not included in the Guru Granth Sahib of Guru Gobind Singh. It is likely that his most important writings were products of the period after the installation of the Adi Granth. His Var will be examined as an appendix to this section. Satta and Balwand are also highly regarded by Sikhs and their Var is set to the musical rag Ramkali and included at page 966 of the scriptures. The other eighteen bards were responsible for 123 verses altogether,[29] most of these coming from the hand of Kal (49), Das (14), and Mathura (10). They are included en bloc near the end of the Adi Granth (pages 1389 - 1409) under the general heading of swayyas. This is a technical term referring to a particular stanza form[30] but in this particular case it is loosely used of their compositions. These betray a strong affinity to Hinduism, a great personal loyalty to the Gurus but with apparent awareness of their teachings. One cannot but be surprised that the Gurus did not find it necessary to intersperse them with comments as they did, for example, to the sabads of Kabir.[31]

The Var of Satta and Balwand.

The ode in praise of the Gurus occupies about two pages of the Adi Granth and significantly is placed immediately after the hymns of Guru Arjan and before those of Kabir, Namdev and the other pre-Nanak bhagats.[32]

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Guru Arjan

> 'is seated on Guru Nanak's throne (takht)
> and the Sat Guru's canopy shines over him.
> By his presence the four directions, the four
> corners of the world are illumined.'

This is the position from which the two bards view the guruship. Little detailed attention is given to Nanak though he is, with the Sat Guru, the major figure in the var. Of greater importance is the idea of continuity from Guru to Guru and therefore over one third of the sabad had the Nanak - Angad relationship as its theme.

> 'Nanak established the Lord's empire and
> laid a very strong foundation for the fortress
> of truth,'

this is the sum of interest in his own contribution, but the next few lines read,

> 'Nanak placed the royal crown over
> Angad's head and hymning the Lord's priase,
> he quaffed nectar. Guru Nanak placed the
> soul-illuminating supremely powerful sword
> of instruction in Lehna's mind. During his
> very life time Guru Nanak made obeisance
> unto Angad, his disciple.

This last point is so important that it is repeated in the next sentence.

> 'Guru Nanak the king, whilst alive, gave
> the apostolic mark to Angad.'

The obedience of the second Guru to Nanak's teaching is a recurring theme of the var.

> 'He did as Guru Nanak ordered him'.

> 'Whatever the Guru said Lehna did
> the very same. He who obeyed the
> order was installed on the Guru's throne.'

By way of contrast the disobedience of Nanak's sons is cited. They turned their backs upon the proclaimed Guru, they turned rebel.

Angad was the properly appointed successor of Nanak but he was more than this. He was one with Nanak, differing from him only in bodily form.

> 'The same is the Divine Light, and the same
> the life form. The king has merely changed
> his body. ...

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

> 'Changing his body Nanak has occupied and sat on the throne which has hundreds of scions. ...
> Nanak's light merged in Guru Angad's light and the Lord himself blended Nanak with himself.'

The preoccupation with succession, continuity, and above all the essential unity of teaching so that the same light shone in each Guru encourages one to conclude that the purpose of the var is apologetic and that the reason for its composition is to be found in a line near its end.

> 'The apostates who serve not their Guru die an ignoble death.'

The context is that of Prithia Chand's rivalry, as Guru Arjan's older brother to the Guru. A parallel is drawn between Prithia Chand and the sons of Guru Nanak and therefore between the rightly appointed Arjan and Angad. Consequently, the bards twice use the expression,

> 'Guru Amar Das obtained the same apostolic mark, the same throne and the same court. The grandson is as acceptable as his father and grandfather.'

The grandson, of course, was the living Guru, Arjan.

There is one other verse which occurs twice.

> 'The four Gurus illumined their own four times. Thou, O Nanak, thyself has assumed the fifth form.'

The 'fifth form' is Guru Arjan. The emphatic 'Thou, O Nanak, thyself,' indicates a wish to reiterate the unity of the fifth Guru with the first.

Satta and Balwand, in this apologetic var, eager to assert the true guruship of Arjan were the first to make explicit the unity of guruship. Their phrase;

> 'The same is the Divine Light, the same the life form. The king has merely changed his body.....'

has been the principle article of Sikh belief about their Gurus ever since it was uttered.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

The Writings of the Bards.

These may be described as unrestrained eulogies. For these court-minstrels the Gurus have clearly taken their place within Hindu mythology and have become in a very real sense Krishna or Ram Chandra of the Kalyug. The bard Kal wrote,

> 'O Guru Nanak, you are blessed with the nectar of the Lord's name and you enjoy both the temporal and spiritual realms. In the Golden Age you enjoyed as the dwarf-incarnation[33] and were pleased to deceive Bal the King. In the Silver Age you enjoyed being called Ram Chandra[34] of the Raghwa dynasty. In the Brass Age, becoming Krishna[35] you killed Mar, the demon and delivered Kans. You blessed Ugar Sain with empire and pious people with fearlessness. In the Iron Age you are called the accepted Guru's Nanak, Angad and Amar Das.' (p. 1390).

The poet's wonderful vision extends to the proclamation that Ravidas, Jaidev, Trilochan, Namdev and Kabir, other bhagats whose works have a place in the Adi Granth also sing Nanak's praises. (Incidentally, this passage suggests that a motive for their inclusion in the Adi Granth by Guru Arjan might be to further the view that Sikhism was the pinnacle of revelation with which, under Akbar's blessing, the future of Indian religion lay). Brahma and Siva as well as a sage called Gautama, the nine legendary Siddhas, Bharthri, the disciple of Gorakhnath, the Bal the King, living in the seventh underworld[36] are other members of the host of beings whose praise is focussed upon Nanak - and therefore, of course, upon Arjan. Elsewhere the same bard calls Nanak the 'sublime avatar of the Infinite Lord.' (p. 1389).

Examples of these utterances could be multiplied many times, but they tend to be repetitive, often describing one of the historical Gurus as the Fish, Tortoise, Man-Lion or Boar avatars of Vishnu (p. 1402, 1403). Two passages of particular significance might, however, be quoted.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

> 'You wear a yellow robe, have teeth like the jasmin flower, and abide for ever with your love. Around your neck you wear a mala, and your head is embellished with a crown of peacock feathers.' (p. 1402).

The unnamed bard claims to be describing Ram Das but if the portrait is historical it might rather be of the Guru of the writer's own time, Arjan. Even greater, perhaps, is his similarity to Rama dressed in yellow, wearing a precious necklace[37] and sometimes with a peacock plume in his crown, frequently accompanied by his consort, Sita. Here it might be appropriate to point out that the wives of the Gurus, sometimes in actual poetry, for example the wife of Angad in the var of Satta and Balwand, and always in tradition, are the objects of great respect.

The second is reminiscent of the Svetasvatara Upanishad,[38] the Bhagavad Gita[39] and most of all the Mool Mantra of Guru Nanak with which there are five verbal similarities.

> 'You, Guru Arjan, are ever-alive, beyond price, unborn, self-existent, the destroyer of dread, the dispeller of other's pain, infinite and fearless.'

It has already been noted that Guru Arjan strongly repudiated any suggestion that God might assume human form. Why then, this readiness to permit saguna vaisnavite bhakti a place in the Adi Granth? One can only speculate. Sikh writers tend to make light of these compositions and to dismiss them as examples of the poetic licence of Hindu poets only slightly touched by Sikh beliefs. This may explain their existence, but not their inclusion in the collection of scripture. Tentatively, one is inclined to see this as part of Guru Arjan's eagerness to win Hindus to his community. Both he and his father were champions of Hindu rights and the new religion was gaining adherents from Hindus who might otherwise have embraced Islam. In Arjan's defence it should be noted, as one sees clearly in the teachings of Guru Gobind Singh that Sikhism re-interpreted the doctrine of avatar. Rama and Krishna were not gods but men commissioned by God and raised to superhuman status by popular piety. Thus it may be that Guru Arjan could accept the writings of the bards taking them to mean that God always declares himself to man. He has done in the vedas, and in Brahma, Vishnu and Siva.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

He does so now in the Sikh Gurus. Seeing himself in this way he could accept the lineage without his rejection of avatar in the Hindu sense being infringed. The refusal to believe in a God who takes form does not require the denial of the views that the sabad-guru is spoken in every age by men of destiny. This belief is the essence of Sikhism and this, Guru Arjan might say, the Bards were describing, however extravagantly.

The Guru in the Writings of Guru Gobind Singh.

These writings consist of such Hukam Namas or written orders as one can come across in various books and the contents of the Dasam Granth. Immediately, with regard to the latter one is confronted by two difficulties. First, the compilation to which the name Dasam Granth, or Granth of the Tenth Guru, was given dates from A.D. 1734 and even then doubts over authenticity or the propriety of including some writings were expressed. Secondly, there is no version of the Dasam Granth in English and little writing about it. Though the script is uniformly Gurmukhi and much of the poetry is in the braj bhasha dialect of medieval Hindi, Sanskrit, Persian, some Arabic and Punjabi are also used. One is therefore compelled to reply on the selected passages translated by M. A. Macauliffe.[40] Dr. Loehlin published his Ph.D. thesis on the Dasam Granth in 1971[41] but throughout his book he tends to quote Macauliffe's translation. Only those compositions which are undisputedly the work of the tenth Guru will be used in this section.

Though Bhai Mani Singh compiled the Dasam Granth in A.D. 1734 there is a tradition that it was consciously produced by Guru Gobind Rai, as he then was, as an antedote to the Adi Granth and speculation that its similarity of length (1428 as opposed to 1430 pages) was not accidental.

Sardar Ram explained the Guru's purpose as follows.

> 'The Guru discovered that from reading the Adi Granth the Sikhs became feeble-hearted. Therefore (said the Guru), I myself will prepare such a Granth that the Sikhs from reading it will learn the art of ruling, the use of weapons and other skills so that they become fit for warfare; so from that very day he began the composition of the huge volume, and when it was completed on Sunday, the eighth day of the new moon in the month of Bhadon 1753 Bikrami (A.D. 1696) he named it the Granth Sahib of the Tenth Sovereign.'[42]

This view Dr. Loehlin repeats without comment though on the previous page he notes that the Dasam Granth as it exists today was not compiled until 1734 and he was surely aware of the anachronism which is present in Sardha Ram's use of the term 'Granth Sahib of the Tenth Sovereign'.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Until 1708, at earliest, the Adi Granth did not have the honorific title attached to it. More acceptable to the Sikhs but also more likely in terms of historical probability, and incidentally an explanation which meets the situation of confusion described by Dr. Loehlin[43] is that of J. S. Grewal and S. S. Bal.

> 'Guru Gobind Singh's literary compositions lay scattered after his death. The Guru, according to the traditional Sikh belief was carrying them with him when he was forced to leave Anandpur in 1704. They were not bound in one volume when he lost them whilst on the move. Sundari instructed Bhai Mani Singh in 1714 to collect them and compile the works of the late Guru in one volume. The Bhai took twenty years to collect the scattered compositions before putting them together in the form of the Dasam Granth in 1734.'[44]

The quotation is, in fact, merely a footnote in a two hundred page biography and is the longest of four references to the compilation made in the book. The Dasam Granth has never enjoyed a status even mildly akin to that of the Adi Granth. In the Rehat Maryada, A Guide to the Sikh Way of Life[45] the Dasam Granth (as opposed to specific hyms of the Tenth Guru) is not mentioned. One is surprised that Dr. Loehlin found it necessary to quote Sardha Ram and astonished that he did not contradict him.

In comparing the Dasam Granth with the Adi Granth Dr. Loehlin notes the similarity of size and length and speculates that the similarity might be more than coincidental. "The Dasam Granth, with exactly the same size page and type as the Adi Granth, has 1428 pages of text, while the Adi Granth has 1430 pages. This seems strange; one wonders whether there was a deliberate attempt to equalise the length of the two books."

One cannot deny the possibility but one feels that if this had been Bhai Mani Singh's aim he would have succeeded in it. Other than length and the use of Gurmukhi script it is the differences which seem most striking. There is no attempt to set out the Dasam Granth in rag divisions. The collection also includes translations as well as original poetical compositions.

As both Dr. Loehlin[46] and M. A. Macauliffe point out the primary purpose of most of Guru Gobind Singh's poetry was to encourage valour and to give courage even to the cowardly and Macauliffe also suggests that

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

> 'the Guru desired that his Sikhs on becoming acquainted with the Hindu sacred writings, might be able to form their own estimate of them and their inferiority to the compositions of the Gurus.'[47]

Dr. Loehlin sees strong Muslim influence in the Guru's religious thought[48] noting particularly his use of seventy-five Muslim names in the thousand divine names which he uses. Of these five are among the ninety-nine Muslim names for God. These are Rahim (Merciful), Karim (Generous), Razakai (Nourisher), Aruv (Pardoner), Salamai (Peaceful) and his rejection of the avatar doctrine. Also, he argues, God is the wholly other far beyond human comprehension, before whom any man can but bow again and again. Through grace God has offered man companionship so that he does not have to understand, only accept and adore.[49] One feels that Dr. Loehlin is too emphatic on the Muslim influence. These traits are to be found in the nirguna sampradaya of North Indian bhakti and, as has been shown already, in the thoughts of the earlier Sikh Gurus. What Dr. Loehlin does seem to do is show the extent to which Guru Gobind Singh remains outside the semitic tradition in one important respect. Perhaps the most characteristic feature of the Jewish, Christian and Muslim is their tendency towards exclusiveness, especially when compared with the indigenous religions of India. Sikhism has never accepted this semitic characteristic. Even the tenth Guru whose life was spent fighting the Mogul Empire had Muslim troops in his army, distinguished between Turk and Muslim and could write these words in his hymn Akal Ustat (In Praise of the Immortal);

> 'The temple and the mosque are the same,
> Puja and namaz are the same,
> All men are one. It is through error
> that they appear different. Allah and
> Abhek are the same. The Puran and
> the Qur'an are the same. They are
> alike, all the creation of the One.'[50] (M. p. 275).

The tenth Guru's attitude to avatar had prompted some discussion.[51] The Guru holds to the nirguna concept of God. He is 'ajanam' without birth.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

'God is without passion, colour, form or outline. He is without worldly love, without anger, without enmity, without jealousy. He is without Karma, error, birth or caste. He has no friend, enemy, father or mother. He has no worldly love, no friend no enemy, no wife. He is invisible, without distinguishing dress and unborn. He is ever the bestower of supernatural power and wisdom, he is of size beyond measure. His form and outline cannot be known.' (M. p. 277).

In Parasnath Avatar his rejection of belief in an incarnate God is explicit and final.

'Say, if Krishna were the ocean of mercy, why should the hunter's arrow have struck him? If he can save other families why did he destroy his own. Say, why did he who called himself the eternal and the unconceived, enter the womb of Devaki. Why did he who had no father call Vasunder his father? Why call Siva God, why speak of Brahma as God? God is not Ram Chandar, Krishna, or Vishnu whom you suppose to be lords of the world. Shukdev, Parasar, and Vyas erred in abandoning the one God and worshipping many. All have set up false religions; I in every way believe that there is but one God.' [52] (M. p. 318).

In this composition as clearly as anywhere in Sikh teaching and with a deliberateness seldom found in the Adi Granth, the tenth Guru carefully rejects sectarianism of all kinds. Worship of Siva and Vishnu, worship of the Lingam, the subtleties of the Vedas and Qur'an, are all rejected as vain because they diminish the creator, failing to lead to the God who is seated in the heart attained through his grace and the repetition of Nam.

With this hymn in mind it is possible to turn to the most perplexing and important statement of Guru Gobind Singh on the subject of his own guruship.

Vachitar Natak (the Wonderfully Coloured Drama), is an autobiographical composition which the Guru wrote some years before the formation of the Khalsa.[53] The hymn describes God's plan of deliverance. The power of Vishnu, Siva, yoga, and circumcision is rejected. The

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

shastras are ineffective, only God's grace can avail. After this preamble the Guru discloses his intention of relating his own history and that of his (Sodhi) family, but first he makes a statement which is relevant to an understanding of later important sections. He writes,

> 'At first when God extended himself
> The world was created by him.
> The man who does good deeds is called
> a demigod in this world. He who does
> bad deeds is styled a demon.' (M. p. 290).

Then follow references to mythical and legendary figures, Kalsain, Aj, Rama, and Sita among them. Sita had two sons, Lahu and Kushu from whom Kalvai and Kalket were descended. They quarreled and Kalvai fled to the region near Benares called Sanandh, hence the name Sodhi, and from this family the Sodhi dynasty of Gurus was born. From the Kushu family came the Bedi family which eventually became reconciled to the Sodhis and persuaded its chief, who had gained a kingdom, to become a sannyasin. This Bedi blessed the Sodhi chief, saying

> 'When I come in the Kalyug under the name
> of Nanak, I will make you worthy of the worship
> of the world, you shall obtain the highest dignity.
> You have heard the three Vedas from us. On
> hearing the fourth you gave up your land. Having
> assumed three births in the fourth I will make you
> Guru. So, the Sodhi King went to the forest and
> the Bedi king was happy with his sovereignty.' (M. pp. 293-4).

The story of Bedi decline is swiftly told to the point where Nanak is born into a farming family. The sequence of Gurus is covered briefly until, finally, the poem becomes autobiographical with the following impressive utterance.

> 'I shall now tell you my own history,
> How God brought me into the world as
> I was performing austerities on the
> mountain of Hemkunt where the mountain
> peaks are conspicious, at Sapt Shring where
> King Pandu practised yoga.
> There I performed great austerities, worshipped
> Maha Kal and so became blended with God.
> My father and mother had also worshipped the
> unseen one and strove in many ways to unite
> themselves with him. The Supreme Guru was
> pleased with their devotion to him.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

> 'When God gave me the order I assumed birth in this Kalyug. I did not desire to come as my attention was on God's feet. God remonstrated with me and sent me into the world. .... ' (M. p. 296).

Before the Guru discloses the instructions he had received from God he repeats the divine discourse in which God deplores the waywardness and pride of both the good, who made themselves gods and the bad who declared themselves to be demons. Siddhis and Sadhus were created but did not find God. The rishis wrote their own smrti instead of following the vedas. Gorakh, Ramanand and Muhammad were no better, each created his own way. The command to Gobind Rai is, therefore,

> 'I have glorified you as my son, I have created you to proclaim the panth. Go, spread the faith there and restrain the people from folly.'

The Guru stood up, made obeisance and replied,

> 'This panth I will spread in the world when you give assistance.'

To the reader, he continues,

> 'For this reason the Lord sent me; then I took birth and came into the world. What he spoke, that I speak, and I bear no enmity to anyone. Those who call me Parmeshur (Supreme Being) shall all fall into the pit of Hell. Know me as God's servant only - have no doubt of that. I am the slave of the Supreme Being, and have come to behold the spectacle of the world: what the Lord told me that I tell the world, and I will not remain silent for fear of mortals.' (M. p. 299).

Its martial concern is obvious for it begins with a eulogy on the sword. That it is satirical is less clear. There is certainly an element of punjabi humour in the description of Bedi - Sodhi relations and the eagerness of the Bedi antecedents of Nanak, the grhastha - sannyasin to obtain a kingdom.' However, the real importance of the poem, in the context of guruship, lies in the assertions that both the Bedi Guru, Nanak and the Sodhi Gurus from Ram Das to Gobind Singh, were descended from Rama and that they were born in response to the divine commandment (hukam) not as the natural consequence of the law of Karma. Furthermore,

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

the mission of Guru Gobind Singh was not to restore dharma, as Krishna did in the Bhagavadgita,[56] but to reveal God, 'to proclaim the panth, to spread the faith.' He is to accomplish what the rishis and Siddhas, Gorakh, Ramanand and Muhammad had failed to do.

Through an examination of the Var of Satta and Balwand, the hymns of the bards and the Vachitar Natak of the tenth Guru, the compositions which most fully and clearly express his concept of Guru, it is possible to discern the attitude of Sikhism to the doctrine of avatar fairly clearly. The doctrine in its vaisnavite sense, is repudiated but this is not the last word. It is re-interpreted and used to enhance the authority of the Sikh gurus. The bardic utterances that the Gurus are the Ram Chandra or Krishna of the Kalyug are allowed their place in the Guru Granth Sahib but the ancient gods are reduced to the status of mere mortals, magificent heroes perhaps, but human none the less. They die. They fail in their work of restoring righteousness. It is left to God to make further attempts through the siddhas, through Gorakh, through Muhammad, but these too fail to establish true religion and therefore the Sikh Gurus of heroic pedigree are sent to 'spread the faith and restrain men from folly'. The doctrine of avatar has become the servant of the Gurus. Any doubts left in the minds of readers of the bardic sections of the Adi Granth have been cleared up by the tenth Guru in Vachitar Natak. This may well have been one of his motives in composing the poem and taking hold of the Hindu tradition imaginatively and, from the Sikh point of view positively. He was at the same time creating a mythology, something which his predecessors had deliberately refused to do, preferring instead to scorn or ignore such aspects of Hinduism.

In his study of the avatar concept, Professor Parrinder[57] quotes from the Vachitar Natak of Guru Gobind Singh but does not note the re-interpretation which the Guru has made. He therefore concludes that the verses

> 'At the command of God I received mortal birth,
> and came into the world. ....
> In the town of Patna I received a body'

as showing 'the persistence of avatar beliefs'. In arriving at this conclusion he is in the company of two Sikh writers and M. A. Macauliffe who quotes them.[58] The first writer is simply described as a later Sikh historian. He wrote "It has been usual that, when God sees his people suffering, he sends a saviour into the world." The second writer, Gur Das, not the famous Bhai Gur Das who died in 1637 CE but another man of the same name living during or after the time of the Tenth Guru, declared, 'Guru Govind appeared as the tenth avatar ... he established the Khalsa as his own sect.' If our reading of Vachitar Natak is correct Gur Das has misinterpreted the teachings of Gobind Singh. He need not have misunderstood the wish of the Guru to be seen as the as the seal of guruship and revelation, which he declared himself to be by installing no human Guru as his successor, and which he may have further encouraged by his use of a white war horse, so reminding those who saw him of the avatar yet to come, Kalki.[59] The Guru's practices must be seen, however, as attempts to boost morale and promote the self-esteem of his followers, as well as a method of commending himself to leaderless Hindus. His doctrinal attitude to avatar was consistent with that of his predecessors but was more thoughtful and ambitious, the work of a man consciously seeking to give his community roots in India's ancient past.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Appendix to Chapter 3. The Var of Bhai Gurdas.

Tradition described Bhai Gurdas as the nephew of Guru Amar Das and an energetic member of the community from his initiation in 1579 until his death in 1637. Though none of his writings found a place in the Adi Granth (it is said that Guru Arjan had no wish to further his conceit and so excluded them),[60] nevertheless, his Vars are approved for reading in the Gurdwara and have been described as 'the key to the Guru Granth Sahib.'[61] It is only part of the first of his thirty-nine Vars which is relevant to the subject of guruship.

In the first Var, stanzas 25 -45 God's remedy for the world's ills is described. It is the message of Guru Nanak. Earlier, the plight of the Kalyug is described, the six Hindu systems, Jainism, Buddhism and the leaders of Hinduism and Islam have all failed. The age is spiritually and morally degenerate. Hearing mankind's cry, therefore, 'the Benificent Lord sent Guru Nanak into the world.'[62] Born by divine command, not as the consequence of Karma the Guru 'received grace at the court of God and went forward to labour.' His task was to carry mankind across the ocean of the Kalyug 'by proclaiming the mantra of the True Name.' He therefore visited many lost but dissatisfied people who, 'because the Lord had not preordained them to practise love' were turning to the vedas and the Ka'ba or to Hindu or Muslim holy men. The main episode in these stanzas is the story of Nanak's meeting with the Siddhas on Mount Sumeru. It concludes with the Guru denying that he possessed any power to work wonders apart from the miracle of the true Name, and with the interesting pronouncement,

> 'I have no refuge other than the Guru (God),
> the sangat, and the bani,'

a statement surely intentionally close to the triple refuge of the Buddhist, the Buddha, the sangha and the dharma. The parallel is not surprising when one remembers that the siddhas were influenced by Tantric Buddhism[63] and that they seem to have exerted a major influence upon the Guru.

The significance of this var in relation to the study of guruship lies in its emphasis upon Nanak's coming into the world to convey God's

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

remedy, in this Bhai Gurdas anticipates Gobind Singh in Vachitar Natak, and in his explicit reference to the three Sikh refuges, the Guru, the sangat and the bani. These are not separate but one for the Guru is manifested in the sangat which remains obedient to the bani.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

The Concept of Guru in the Post-Nanak Sabads of the Adi Granth and in the Dasam Granth.

Footnotes to Chapter Three.

1. Vaudeville 1974, p. 114.
2. Sher Singh 1944, (2nd ed. 1966) pp. 51 - 54. The Author argues also, especially in Ch. 16, that Sikhism provides a fourth path, nam marga which is not identical with that of bhakti.
3. Cultural Heritage of India, 2nd ed. 1956, vol. 4., p. 582.
4. The reference is found in Darbastan, 1645 C. E., and quoted in Punjab : Past and Present vol. 3, 1969, p. 52.
5. Khushwant Singh 1963, vol. 1, p. 63 footnote.
6. ascetics who claim either to be followers of Sri Chand, a son of Guru Nanak or who assert that he was one of their number.
7. the head person of a religious house.
8. See chapter five below.
9. a 'back to the original purity of Sikhism' movement which emerged as the Central Singh Sabha organisation in 1873.
10. the sadh sangat is the community or congregation of Sikh believers who are known to be steadfast in the faith. cf. Buddhist sangha and the satsangs of various Hindu bhakti teachers.
11. manja is the masculine form of manji meaning bed (charpoy). This was a substitue for the gaddi or throne used by the Gurus. The term therefore came to describe the district supervised by the Gurus' vice-regents who sat on the manjas. Guru Amar Das divided the areas where Sikhs were found into 22 such districts. Akbar divided his empire into the same number of administrative areas. Whether Amar Das was imitating him and using the same boundaries or not is unknown. (cf. Transformation of Sikhism, p. 33).
12. Three of the sons of Brahma who remained for ever boys, pure and innocent, declining to create progeny. Usually they are regarded as four in number, Sananda being the fourth, but sometimes a fifth is added (Ribha). Concerns of metre may have limited Arjan to mentioning three.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

13. Kam, lobh, moh, krodh, ahankar: lust, greed, attachment, anger, pride. For a full discussion see Ethics of Sikhism, Avtar Singh, 1970, ch. 3.
14. This allusion to Nanak is frequently used by all the Gurus whose writings are included in the Adi Granth to denote unity of thought and refer the reader or listener to the one through whom it originally became manifest. Nanak's own use is akin to that of Lalla, Farid, Kabir and others. The Tenth Guru does not seem to have referred to Nanak in this way.
15. for further discussion see McLeod 1968, p. 191.
16. Danielou 1964, p. 38.
17. Danielou 1964, p. 39.
18. Mandukya Upanishad 1-1
19. Bhagavad Gita 8. 13.
20. see McLeod 1968, p. 191, and Yoga, Wood 1959, ch. 9.
21. see McLeod 1968, p. 191.
22. see Macauliffe 1963, vol. 2, ch. 3.
23. e.g. tax exemption through occasional imperial privilege, the pride of association a community which seemed to have the world at its feet.
24. Prahlad was the son of an evil King Haranya-Kasipu who tortured him and eventually decided to kill him for his devotion to Vishnu. The god in the form of Nirsimha (the fourth man-lion, avatar) destroyed the geni-king. Prahlad is regarded as a perfect example of piety.
25. See also A. G. p. 885.
26. See Macauliffe 1963, vol. 2., pp. lxxx, lxxxi, and McLeod 1968, p. 23.
27. the full account is given in Macauliffe 1963, vol. 2., p. 276 - 281.
28. Macauliffe 1963, chs. 6 and 7.
29. Kohli 1961, p. 8.
30. Kohli 1961, p. 83.
31. e,g, A. G. p. 1375.
32. It begins of page 966 of the Adi Granth.
33. In his fifth descent Vishna decided to manifest himself as a dwarf in order to recover the three worlds from Bal, King of the geni (asuras) who had

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

33 won them through his practice of austerity and valour. He asked Bal to give him what he could cover in three strides and so deceived him into losing his sovereignty.

34. The seventh avatar of Krishna was as Rama, King of Ayodhya, the embodiment of righteousness, slayer of the demon-King Ravana.

35. Krishna, the Dark One, was the eighth avatar of Krishna. It was an incarnation of love and valour by means of which King Kansa and the demon were defeated. He was the first avatar of Dvapara Yug or Age of Conflicts, described by Sikh writers as the Age of Brass.

36. Bala (Bali) was a good and virtuous king who defeated Indra and through his austerity and devotion gained power over the three worlds. Vishnu in the form of the Dwarf-avatar deceived and vanquished him but left him with power over Kakola, or the seventh hell, the place of utter and hopeless anguish. The most famous Bhatri was a grammarian of the sixth century C. E. who practised austerity during one phase of his varied life. He lived long before Gorakh but this need no invalidate a traditional and legendary association.

37. Danielou 1964, p. 175.

38. Svetasvatara Upanishad, 4.1, 4.7, 4.17 - 21, 5.13-14, 6.5, 6.13.

39. Bhagavad Gita, 4-6, 9.4, 10.3, 11.18, 13.12. Above all this description of Arjuna matches the man of godly destiny of chapter 16, with the notable exceptions of being ascetic.

> 'Fearless and pure in heart,
> Steadfast in the exercise of wisdom,
> Restrained and open-handed, performing sacrifice,
> Intent on study Holy writ, ascetic and upright,
> None hurting, truthful, from anger free,
> Renouncing all, at peace, averse to calumny,
> Compassionate to (all) existent beings, free from
> nagging greed,
> Gentle, modest, never fickle,
> Ardent, patient, enduring, pure,
> Not treacherous, nor arrogant -
> Such is a man who is born (to inherit)
> A godly destiny.' (Hindu Scriptures : Zaehner p. 312).

Of course, the Guru also possesses more-than-human qualities by virtue of being merged with God. Nevertheless, it is interesting that, as men, all the Gurus, traditionally, were men who displayed these qualities to perfection.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

40. Macauliffe 1963, volume six.
41. Loehlin 1971.
42. quoted Loehlin 1971, p. 19, from Sikhan de Raj di Vithya, Lahore, 1892.
43. Loehlin 1971, p. 18.
44. Grewal and Bal 1967, p. 239, footnote 6.
45. published by the Shromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, 1945, English translation 1971.
46. Loehlin 1971, p. 58. Here Dr. Loehlin writes about the purpose of the Dasam Granth. He seems to assume that Guru Gobind Singh intends to compile a second collection which is a matter of some doubt. It is more appropriate to speak of the Guru's purpose in composing his poems rather than to talk about the purpose of the collection.
47. Macauliffe 1963, volume five p. 84.
48. Loehlin 1971, ch. 7. passim.
49. Loehlin 1971, pp. 21 and 22.
50. page references in this section (e.g. M. p. 275) are to Macauliffe 1963, volume 5.
51. E. G. Parrinder, Avatar and Incarnation 1970, pp. 95 - 97.
52. According to the Mahabharata Suka was the son of Vyasa, born as a result of his passionate love for the apsara Ghritachi. Parasara was the father of Vyasa. Both Vyasa and Parasara are examples of students of Vedic knowledge who were distracted from it to form wrong attachments. This, rather than the worshipping of 'the many' would seem to be their real failing.
53. Loehlin 1971, p. 26.
54. cf. Loehlin's translation of parts of this poem. Loehlin 1971, pp. 30-31.
55. Loehlin 1971, pp. 26 and 31.
56. Bhagavad Gita 4.7 and 8.
57. E. G. Parrinder, Avatar and Incarnation 1970, p. 96.
58. M. A. Macauliffe; The Sikh Religion; a Symposium 1958 pp. 139, 143; and The Sikh Religion 1963, volume four, p. 357.
59. Kalki, the tenth avatar of Vishna is yet to come. He will appear at the end of the Age of Strife riding on a white horse. Through his victory the Golden Age will be restored.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

60. Kohli 1961, p. 14. Bhai Gurdas was, of course, responsible for copying the Adi Granth at Arjan's instruction.

61. Varan Bhai Gurdas ed. Hazara Singh and Vir Singh, quoted McLeod 1968, p. 14.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Chapter Four.

The Guru Granth Sahib in Orthodox Sikh worship.

Although one may read books written by Sikhs and non-Sikhs in which the scripture of Sikhism is described as the Adi Granth or even 'the Granth' a more common term and that preferred by Sikhs is that of Guru Granth Sahib.

The word 'Sahib' in itself denotes respect and to some extent a personalising of the book. The term 'Guru' strengthens the emphasis and the treatment of the book by the Sikhs completes the personification.

One must go back in history to appreciate it fully.

In 1604/5 C. E. the Harmandir or Darbar Sahib was completed at Amritsar on the site now occupied by the Golden Temple of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. In building it Guru Arjan was completing a process began in the time of Guru Ram Das who composed the 'Lavan' wedding hymn and provided alternative rituals at Diwali, Holi and Baisakhi to those practised by Hindus. Guru Arjan was now providing a gurdwara which would be a place of pilgrimage comparable to the 84 of Hindu tradition. In the centre of the Harmandir, however, the gaddi was occupied not by Guru Arjan but by the Adi Granth which was compiled under his instruction. The imprisonment and arrest of the Fifth Guru occurred soon afterwards and one cannot conjecture what he would have done had he lived. His successor Har Gobind built his 'palace', the Akal Takht on an elevated position overlooking the Harmandir and dominating the gateway and causeway to it.

Some distiuction between the living Guru and scripture as a repository of authority had begun though it might be unwise to stress it too much. Presumably Guru Arjan had it in mind to create an enhanced status for the Sikhs; they like Muslims and Hindus were now to be people of the Book.

It was left to the Tenth Master not so much to complete a process but to change the course of Sikhism.

In 1699 at Anandpur he summoned his followers to assemble and created out of them the Khalsa. Although it is the military aspect of this community within Sikhism which is best known and to which Sikhs themselves have often drawn most attention there is another side which must not be neglected,

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

especially in the present context: namely that of the Spirit of the Guru residing within the Khalsa.

'The Khalsa is the Guru and the Guru is the Khalsa. There is no difference between you and me. As Guru Nanak seated Angad on a throne so I have made you also a Guru.[1] ' is how Guru Gobind Singh described his relationship with the Keshdaris. In the Amrit Pahul ceremony by which Sikh men and women are admitted to the Khalsa it is the spiritual and moral significance of membership which is stressed rather than the material. The 'Pure One' must be a true disciple of his Guru.

It is difficult if not impossible to decide what, altogether, was in the mind of Guru Gobind Singh when he founded the Khalsa in 1699.[2] Certainly a tightly knit elite of loyal Sikhs - though one to which any one could belong. Certainly some ousting of caste divisions by creating one Sikh caste the Khalsa each member of which would be a kshatriya and in which each woman would have a 'thread of her own'. That he foresaw a transference of guruship at this time is not certain.

Eight years later such a transfer was made. Before his death Guru Gobind Singh took a coconut and five paises and placed these in front of the Adi Granth which now contained the hymns of his father as well as the compositions included by Guru Arjan. The act he performed had been undertaken by each Guru except Arjan Har Krishna and Tegh Bahadur as they designated their successors.[3] Now Guru Gobind Singh declared that the Adi Granth, not a human being should be the Guru of the Sikhs. In it and the sangat, by which he meant the Khalsa, the guruship would be perpetuated.[4]

If there is any respect in which Sikhism might be said to be unique within the bhakti tradition of Indian religion it is in its elevation of a book to the status of guruship. Other groups, for example the Kabir panthis, may have written down and so retained the teachings of their founder but the gaddi of Kabir at Benares is empty, it is not occupied by a book.

Within Sikhism not everyone has accepted the Adi Granth as Guru. There are the namdaris. Their concept of guruship and attitude towards the Adi Granth will be considered elsewhere. For the moment it is necessary to examine the way in which the Guru Granth Sahib is regarded within the context of orthodox Sikh worship and life.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Though the term gurdwara has become attached to buildings in the Punjab, Britain and elsewhere strictly speaking where the Guru Granth Sahib is there is a gurdwara. A room set apart in a Sikh home, or if not a corner of a room carefully not used for other purposes than that of housing the book and gathering before it for worship, this also may be called a gurdwara.

No matter where the book is a number of features will also be found. First the book will be placed upon a cushion or upon some more elaborate structure. This is called a 'manji' or 'manji sahib', it will be placed under a canopy which may be an integral part of the manji sahib. Behind the manji will sit a granthi, holding a chauri.

A few comments might be appropriate at this point. First, although Sikhs enthrone the Guru Granth Sahib and treat it as, for example, Guru Nanak is depicted in portraits, that is seated on a gaddi with a tree above his head as a canopy and Bhai Bala in attendance holding a peacock feather chauri. Yet they are careful to describe the manji sahib as a 'cot' and to repudiate the idea of it being a gaddi. The use of the chauri seems to owe its significance to the idea of miri (temporal power) in Sikh guruship rather than to that of piri or spiritual power. As, in portraits, one sees Lakshman or Hanuman holding a peacock feather fan as they stand beside Rama, or as one sees it used in Mogul times (see the cover picture of the Pelican History of India volume 2 by Percival Spear) so the custodian of the Guru Granth Sahib stands behind it chauri in hand.

At the Kabir Chaura in Benares a pair of wooden sandals representing the guru are washed daily and the charn-amrit given to visitors. In cults which have a living guru it is customary for him to bathe each morning and for his chelas to bathe at the same time in some cases, or in others to attend upon him waiting at the side of the pool. In Sikhism anyone who touches the Guru Granth Sahib should have bathed. Thus the attendant undertakes that which cannot be done to the sacred book.

The Guru Granth Sahib is solemnly opened each morning and closed each evening. Commentators such as J. N. Farquhar compare its treatment with that accorded to a Hindu 'idol' within a temple. There are clear similarities, especially when, in some gurdwaras, for example that at Birmingham, it is carried at night from the manji to a bed in another room and

laid to rest. However this treatment also resembles that given to a guru, perhaps even more that given to a prince. Anyone who has seen the long line of pilgrims walking barefooted from the gateway along the bridge to the Harmandir at Amritsar and then bowing before the Guru Granth Sahib cannot help being aware that as well as attending the darshan of a guru or a God he is also attending the diwan of an emperor. When J. N. Farquhar wrote "the Granth is treated like an idol in their central shrine, the Golden Temple of Amritsar", [5] in the context of Nanak's condemnation of idolatry one cannot help wondering whether he had not misread the symbolism and confused piri with miri. In his defence one must add that this mistaken interpretation, if such it is, is shared by many ordinary Sikhs at the Darbar Sahib in their local gurdwara.

Returning to the room of the gurdwara in which the Guru Granth Sahib is housed, it is called the diwan as is the act of worship conducted there.

A Sikh on entering the room approaches the Guru Granth Sahib, lies prostrate in front of it or at least bows until the forehead touches the ground, makes an offering of money or food (though flowers or food may be given) and takes his place in the congregation which sits on the floor below the manji sahib. Worship being congregational, although the Sikh may not be present at the beginning of the service he will attempt to remain to the end when he will receive karah parshad, a warm sweet food made of flour or semolina, sugar, water and ghee.

Whilst again one may interpret part of this action in terms analogous to those of a person entering the presence of a Mogul prince a most appropriate comparison would be with the approach of a chela to his guru. The disciple comes into the presence of the guru to receive darshan. He comes bringing dakshina. In turn he receives prasad and in some circumstances shaktipat. Whatever Sikh gyanis may assert many of the Sikh faithful do come to the Guru Granth Sahib in this way. Even when there is no granthi present to read the scriptures they will sit in silence in front of the book, seeking darshan. They will offer their gifts and in some Indian gurdwaras a dish of parshad in the form of patashas will be available constantly. With reference to shaktipat, the transference of power from the guru to the chela, the practice of giving and receiving romallas might be mentioned. At any time one may provide a covering

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

for the Guru Granth Sahib but the receiving of one seems to be confined to certain occasions, perhaps a marriage, more often when one is undertaking a journey, or at a bereavement. The gift is regarded as auspicious, something of the shakti of the Guru Granth Sahib is transferred to the recipient.

In the previous paragraph it has been suggested that in popular Sikhism the Guru Granth Sahib is treated in many respects as a Hindu guru might be, that the rites, which are certainly similar receive the same interpretation.

A note of reservation must now be injected. Regarding terminology the Sikh simply describes bowing before the Guru Granth Sahib as 'mutta dekna', - touching the forehead, a matter-of-fact term, and making an offering is 'bhent' which might be used of making any gift to any person. Receiving a Romalla is covered by the term Siropa which is a compound of head and foot and might generally be used of any gift of clothing, as for example the giving of a turban or a suit of shalwar - kameeze at a wedding.

Furthermore, the theologically educated sikh will say that it is not the Guru Granth Sahib as an object which is respected, it is the Bani, the teaching which it contains which is respected. So, in the time of Guru Arjan pilgrims might go to the Darbar Sahib as well as to the living Guru. In fact, by placing his own composition in the Adi Granth and, on occasions when he spent the night in the Darbar Sahib, sleeping on the floor at a lower level than the book Arjan was asserting that the Bani not the person is that which is important.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

The Guru Granth Sahib in Orthodox Sikh Worship.

Footnotes to Chapter Four.

1. Macauliffe 1963, vol. 5 p. 96, cf. p. 243 and the Swayyas of Guru Gobind Singh p. 263, and Loehlin 1971, p. 46.
2. Grewal and Bal 1967, chapter 6 and appendix C.
3. A considerable number of Sikhs and students of the Sikh religion including Professor McLeod and Dr. Loehlin have been asked for an explanation of the significance of the 5 coins and the coconut traditionally linked with the installation of a Guru and of the sacred book in 1708. Only one person, Mr. K. S. Kathuria of Huddersfield has offered a complete solution. It is that the coconut represents the created universe, the hairs on it being the vegetation. The coins are the five elements, air, earth, fire, water and ether, and also signify the skill of man. Thus, to the new Guru was offered the world of God and of man, for his protection. The gesture also acknowledged the sovereignty of the Guru.
   It might be noted that sometimes the coconut in Hindu rites is seen as a replacement for the head of a human sacrifice, and also that some accounts of this Sikh rite of transferring authority refer only to the five copper coins (e.g. Puratan Janam Sakhi 56; McLeod 1968 p. 50.)
4. Macauliffe 1963, p. 243.
5. J. N. Farquhar, Primer of Hinduism, OUP. 1912, p. 138.

The many terms used in this chapter are explained in the glossary.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Chapter Five.

The Namdhari Concept of Guru.

From the day Guru Nanak designated Lehna to be his successor and some Sikhs turned instead to his son Sri Chand there has always been a tendency towards sectarianism. Among the followers of Kabir or Swami Narayan, Vallabha or the Buddha divisions have also occurred and Christianity and Islam at least of other faiths, must also admit the same inclination.

Of the three movements mentioned by Khushwant Singh in his history,[1] the Nirankaris, the Radha Soamis of Beas, and the Namdharis only the last need concern us. The other two, though not Guru-sects do not, as the Namdharis do offer a distinctive and ultimately rival concept of guruship. Indeed the Radha Soami movement seems to be one to which ascetic-minded Sikhs may belong without infringing their status in the orthodox community.

Having made this statement it must be added that this also applies in practice to Namdharis within the Sikh community. The western semitic sectarianism whereby a baptist may still regard a Roman Catholic as not being a Christian or an orthodox Jew may deny that a reform-Jew is in fact a Jew, is of a different kind to that which we are studying. Though Khushwant Singh states that Namdharis do not intermarry with Sikhs (i.e. Akalis) unless the party concerned accepts their persuasion[2] there are many particular examples which may be cited in contradiction. What is true is that the families related to the Guru's family will not intermarry with Akalis. In this respect, according to some followers close to the Sat Guru Namdharis fall into two categories, those who are strictly vegetarian (including fish and eggs in foods to be avoided) teetotal, non-smoking, and total in their avoidance of drugs - tea, coffee, many modern medicines, and those who are 'lax', probably eating in the Akali langar, which strict Namdharis would not do.

Their own writings emphasise their contribution to India's freedom struggle and their vegetarianism (Sri Sat Guru Jagjit Singh is a vice-president of the International Vegetarian Union), but within Sikhism it is the concept of

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

guruship which marks them out. In the Sikh community they may be recognised by their white turbans tied flat across the head.

The Namdharis believe that Guru Gobind Singh did not die on October 7th 1708 C. E., but gave his enemies the slip and lived as a sannyasin until 1812. Before his death he appointed Balak Singh of Hazro as his successor and this man began to preach poverty and simplicity of life and religion based on the repetition of nam. In 1841 a Ramgarhia Sikh named Ram Singh came under the influence of the guru and long before his initiation as twelfth guru in 1862 was an influential member of the movement and in many respects its leader. It is difficult, with any degree of satisfaction, to discover the personality and contribution of Guru Ram Singh but fortunately, for the purposes of this study it is not necessary to assess his place in the freedom movement or his political involvement or compare it with the impression one receives of a pious, ascetic, though perhaps charismatic man. It is enough to say that he began to conduct himself like the earlier gurus. He issued hukumnamas (decrees) regulating the conduct of his followers (stressing among other things vegetarianism and a boycott of foreign goods[3]), laying down the form which the marriage ceremony was to take, and giving them spiritual instructions.[4] Some Namdharis attacked Muslim slaughterhouses, in Amritsar, Raikot, (district Ludhiana), and in the Muslim state of Malerkotla. For the last crime 82 Namdharis were blown to pieces from the mouths of cannons and Ram Singh was deported to Burma. During this period of Kuka[5] unrest the British accumulated a file on the Guru in which they referred to his being a re-incarnation of Guru Gobind Singh. "There is a report current that Ram Singh is identifying himself with the new avatar (sic) prophesied in the Granth (sic) by Govind Singh, namely that in 1878 a new man would be initiated by his Guroo; it is now (Sambat) 1924 so Ram Singh gives out he was born in 1878 and was initiated at Hazroo in 1897." There follows a quotation of the prophecy.

'In 78 will come and will go in 97 another person of note.' These are, in fact, words of Guru Nanak, found on page 723 of the Adi Granth. In the English translation of Manmohan Singh they are translated:

> 'Babar shall come in 1578 and Humayun shall depart in 1597 and then shall rise Sher Shah Suri the disciple of a hero.'[6]

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

In their book of devotion (Nitnam[7]) there is a statement attributed to Guru Gobind Singh which constitutes the main basis of Namdhari belief.

> "During my twelfth incarnation my name will be Ram Singh, son of a carpenter belonging to Bhaini, who will be the most perfect and greatest, possessed of tremendous spiritual power and with none other to excel. The sect to which this Guru will belong will be honoured. I bow before that twelfth incarnation of the Sikhs."

This quotation is not from either the Adi Granth or the Dasam Granth but the Sau Sakhi,[8] a collection of sayings and stories attributed to the Gurus.

In 1872 Guru Ram Singh was deported to Rangoon and then moved elsewhere in Burma, dying at Mergui on 29th November 1885, according to the British and Akali Sikhs. The Kukas believe that Guru Ram Singh is alive and living in secret to re-appear at a time of his own choosing. When I asked the present Sat Guru about his own status and when Ram Singh would return he told me that his position was that of administering and guiding the Kukas in the absence of Ram Singh. He happily accepted the term 'vice regent' which I suggested. Ram Singh would return, he said, in terms reminiscent of Krishna in the Gita, when the powers of chaos and evil were at their worst. Then Guru Jagjit Singh would hand over office to him and return to the status of a chela. This peculiar belief in two Gurus dated to the Rangoon imprisonment when Ram Singh appointed his brother to look after the Namdhari community, realising, as he put it, that otherwise no one could forgive or remove the excommunications which he had imposed. The belief that Ram Singh still lives and will return may be paralleled in Christianity ('he will come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead')[10], in Muslim beliefs about Ahmad or the Mahdi[11], in the Hindu idea of avatar or in beliefs that the British King Arthur and the German Frederick Barbarrosa will return from sleep to deliver their people. Though Kukas will refer to his last words, as he was being taken from Bhaini Sahib into exile,

> "Do not believe that the British may say about me. This body can sustain life for 250 years',

belief does not depend only upon the Guru's words. There is a desire to believe, the Sikh belief in rebirth and the power and purpose of guruship supports it, and

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

the stories which Namdharis will tell of the Sat Guru being seen in Thailand, or in the dreams of devotees seem to be of importance more as a means of convincing the sceptical Akali than for the purpose of sustaining their own faith.[12]

Asked how the Sat Guru Ram Singh will be recognised on his return and whether there was no danger of fraudulent claimants coming forward Sat Guru Jagjit Singh smiled and said that Kukas who had seen Ram Singh in visions would recognise him. Moreover, he added, before the monsoons come there is not a frog to be heard, but just before the rain begins to fall the air is filled with the noise of croaking. So the Kukas will know intuitively of Ram Singh's return.

When I asked the Sat Guru how he had been chosen by his father Sat Guru Partap Singh he said he did not know. He had not been present and he had not wished to become the Sat Guru. He was told that this was the will of his father and he accepted it. He was unable to say what criteria would be applied if he had to choose a successor. When the time came, he said, he would know. The present Sat Guru has a daughter and no sons. Though his wife travels with him the little girl, now aged about fourteen years, remains at Bhaini Sahib. He did say that no woman could become Sat Guru, their monthly impurity automatically excluding them.

Sat Guru Jagjit Singh is a quiet, friendly, humble man possessed of a sense of humour but not given to making jokes in public or to oratory. On the contrary he is self-effacing and one who would not be noticed in a crowd. His presence obviously moves the devotee but this is the result of faith and not the personal magnetism of the Sat Guru, nor any attempt on his part or that of his followers to manipulate the minds and hearts of his audiences.

Diwan is a seemly occasion, the practices which earned the Kukas their nickname seem to have disappeared. His followers wait for him, men and women sitting separately, in the hall where diwan is to be held. Some devotees may await his arrival outside and offer him garlands and make charn puja when he comes. During the time of waiting ragis will play music and sing of the joy of receiving the Sat Guru's darshan. The small white pillow on which he will sit, the assan[13] remains the focal point even in his absence.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

When he enters the room everyone stands. When he is seated the congregation sits though some members will come forward and kneel in fro of him until their heads touch the ground and most of these will offer money food or garlands. The assan itself can be an object of reverence.

At the side of the Sat Guru will be one of his attendants holding a chauri of yak's hair which is occasionally waved over the Guru's head.

Although Sat Guru Jagjit Singh is the vice regent of Ram Singh this i not apparent at Diwan or in the general feeling which Namdharis have towa him. In their homes his picture shares a place of reverence with those of Ram Singh, Nanak and Gobind Singh. As he comes to Diwan devotees rush forward to garland him, perform charn puja or touch the dust of the ground has walked on to their foreheads. At one Diwan a devotee surprised all pre by circumambulating the Sat Guru four times in a clockwise direction. The man, I understand had recently become a Namdhari and was presumably wis to express his devotion to the Guru. Mr. Swaran Singh Sanehi, the Sat Gur secretary had never seen anyone do this before and could only parallel it wi the way pilgrims circumambulate the Darbar Sahib at Amritsar. He asked should I ever discover more to let him know the explanation.

The darshan of the Sat Guru is regarded as enlightening, powerful a health giving to the extent that the wife of at least one akali Sikh whose child was unwell wished to take her son to receive darshan.

At Diwan the Sat Guru may speak in his quiet, low voice, or he may join the ragis by playing his dilruba, a stringed instrument played with a bo Diwan begins with the coming of the Sat Guru and ends with his departure.

When the Sat Guru came to Leeds in July, 1974, Diwan was held in the Gurdwara, that is, in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib. This was unusual[14] and caused some embarrassment but also high-lighted certain differences and similarities. Some Sikhs entered the Gurdwara and paid respect to the Guru Granth Sahib, kneeling before it and offering money, and then bowed to the Sat Guru. Others ignored him. Some knelt only before him, a minority knelt in front of the Sat Guru and then in front of the Guru Granth Sahib in that order. For the Namdharis Jagjit Singh clearly has the

Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

status which the book has for akalis. He is garlanded, bowed to and followed in procession in exactly the way that the book is.

However, this does not mean that the book has no place. It is the source of doctrine and is used at the naming of a child and in the bogh ceremony. However, for the Namdharis a gurdwara is a place which a Guru has visited, not a room in which the Guru Granth Sahib has been installed. 15 Naturally, they do not call the book by this name, using instead Holy Granth, Granth or Granth Sahib.

Perhaps something of the difference can be seen in the following comparison. An attendant of the Sat Guru told me that he possessed two copies of the book, one being very old. These constituted an important part of his library but were not specially treated and his home was not a gurdwara as the Sat Guru had never visited it. On the other hand, two years ago an Akali friend, after many years, had managed to put aside a room in his house in Amritsar to be a gurdwara. He had decorated it, carpetted it, bought a manji sahib, a chauri, a Guru Granth Sahib and a beautiful romalla as a covering for it. He was rejoicing that he had now been able to fulfil the desire of a lifetime, a desire which would be fulfilled for the Namdhari only if the Guru entered his home.

There are two other points of note which need to be made about the Namdhari concept of guruship before this section is closed.

First, with reference to the book being the Guru they ask, which book, which copy of the Holy Granth is the Guru? They tell a story of the boy Guru Har Krishen who they say intended to end the line of living Gurus and replace it with the book. Bhai Gurbaksh, one of his followers remonstrated with him, saying that this would lead to there being as many gurus as there were copies of the Granth. Har Krishen then declared that the Guru would be found in Bakala. Consequently, 22 members of the Sodhi family turned up at Bakala each with his copy of the Granth and claiming to be Guru.

Eventually, a merchant Makhan Shah came to the village to find the Sikh Guru to whom, in prayer during a storm at sea, he had promised a gift of money should he reach home safely. He approached each Sodhi in turn with

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

2 pieces of gold which were gratefully received. When he came to Tegh Bahadur the elderly man turned to the merchant and said, "But where are the others, you promised me 500?" From this the merchant and the Sikhs knew that this was the Sodhi who had heard his prayer. Accordingly, he was installed as Guru.

The Makhan Shah episode is well known and told by Macauliffe among others. The preface seems to be peculiar to the Namdharis. Its purpose is to say that after one near mistake the son of Guru Tegh Bahadur would never have repeated it and conferred guruship upon a book!

The second point relates to the belief in avatar. This the Namdharis accept justifying it from the swayyas of the Holy Granth, especially that found on page 1390.

> "O Guru Nanak, thou art blessed with the nectar of the Lord's name and enjoyest both the temporal and spiritual realsm. In the Satyug thou enjoyedst as the dwarf incarnate and wert pleased to receive Bal, the King.
>
> In the Treta age, thou enjoyedst being called Ram Chandra of the Raghwa dynasty.
>
> In the Duapa age, becoming Krishna, thou killedst Mur, the demon, and delivered Kams. Thou blessedst Ugar Sain with empire and pious persons with fearless status.
>
> In the Kalyug thou art called the accepted Gurus, Nanak, Angad and Ram Das."

On page 1409 the word avatar is used of Guru Arjan.

Taking these with the prediction cited above that the tenth Guru would be born in the form of Ram Singh the Namdharis believe their Guru to be the manifestation of God to the same degree that akalis regard the bani or shabad Guru as being the word of God, and therefore eternal. In rejecting this Akali belief the Namdharis not only ask which copy of the Granth is the Sat Guru? They also refer to page 1264 of the Adi Granth where the words of the fourth Guru are to be found.

> "The man who adores and serves the Guru; that man is pleasing to my Lord God .....
> He alone is said to be the True Guru, who realises

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

> the Lord and utters the Lord God's discourse.
>
> Deeming the Guru true and supreme I offer to him in many ways clothes, food, silk and satin robes, and the merit of that offering diminishes not.
>
> The enlightened True Guru is manifestly the embodiment of God, who utters the nectar-word."

These verses of Ram Das cannot, they argue, relate to a book, they must pertain to a living human being, at present to Shri Sat Guru Jagjit Singh Maharaj, in the absence of Ram Singh.

Fortunately, it has not been our purpose to evaluate Namdhari claims and enter the Akali-Kuka controversy. We have simply attempted to describe and briefly examine the Namdhari concept of Guru believing it to be important in the context of this study.

The Sat Guru does not add to the revelation, this is contained in the Adi Granth, the Dasam Granth and the huknamas of Ram Singh, but he gives darshan, by journeying among his followers in America, East Africa, the United Kingdom and India he sustains their faith and provides a focus of attention and devotion. He is not to be paralleled with what Peter Brent and after him Khushwant Singh have described as 'The Godmen of India'. In fact it may be no accident that in the Holi issue of the 'Illustrated Weekly of India', 1973, (vol. xciv no. 11), Khushwant Singh made no mention of him and not only because he regards him as unorthodox.

The Sat Guru is not necessary for diksha. Anyone who accepts the 5 ks (though Namdharis wear the kirpan embedded in the kangha) and the huknamas of Ram Singh may be given the secret name of God by any other Kuka. One is left, therefore, with the conclusion that the Sat Guru is, most of all, the personfication of the belief that the Guru exists in human form still, and not in the bani or shabad.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

The Namdhari Concept of Guru.

Footnotes to Chapter Five.

1. Khushwant Singh 1963, vol. 2, p. 134.
2. Khushwant Singh 1963, vol. 2, p. 135.
3. 1857 decree (14th April) quoted in Enlighteners, Nihal Singh, p. 64, lists nine points of discipline. Rise 1 a.m., bathe and worship God, be pure in thought and deed, do not use meat, do not be violent to animals - even snakes, do not smoke or drink, no not castrate your bulls, boycott foreign goods, boycott British educational institutions, boycott the law courts. Violence should not be used in the course of obeying these instructions.
4. 1866 decree. Nihal Singh p. 66.
5. This is a popular name given to namdharis. It means 'shrieker' and refers to their nineteenth century form of dervish-like worship which consisted of dancing and shouting or crying ecstatically.
6. The verse clearly refers to the Mogul Emperors of the sixteenth century but namdharis regard it as prophetic rather than historical.
7. This is similar to the Akali nitnaam but in addition to sabads taken from the Adi Granth there is also a section of regulations governing personal conduct and belief.
8. The sau sakhis are literally one hundred sayings, though there are actually many more. Namdharis regard them as authentic but secretly preserved sayings of the Gurus, of a prophetic nature. The view of akali Sikhs is that they are spurious inventions created to justify policies and strenghten morale.
9. This and other references are to interviews obtained during Sat Guru Jagjit Singh's visit to Leeds, 12th - 15th July, 1974.
10. The Nicene Creed.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

11. Encyclopaedia of Islam p. 310 - 313; Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Hastings, volume 8 p. 336 - 340.

12. The story is told of a contemporary namdhari painter who wished to produce a portrait of the Guru. For two years he tried unsuccessfully, then at last he was granted a vision and immediately he was able to undertake the work.

13. The gaddi of Sat Guru Ram Singh is at Baini Sahib and unoccupied. Jagjit Singh sits on a small pillow or assan, a word derived from the same root as asana or posture in yoga.

14. A number of Namdhari and Akali Sikhs in Leeds are related and worship in the same gurdwara. It was not surprising that when the Sat Guru visited Leeds in 1974, the gurdwara executive should permit him to hold diwan in the gurdwara. However, they insisted that the Guru Granth Sahib should remain and that a granthi should be seated behind it during diwan. The Sat Guru's assan was placed in the centre of the room at right angles to it. No one should sit directly in front of the sacred book. Worshippers could bow before the scripture or the Sat Guru or, both, as some did. Honour seemed to be satisfied by this arrangement.

15. Namdharis call a building used by Sikhs for worship and which contains a copy of the Guru Granth Sahib but has not been visited by one of the Gurus a dharmsala.

....

For a brief akali appraisal of Sat Guru Ram Singh as a political figure and of the namdharis as freedom fighters read Baba Ram Singh and the Kuka Movement, Sikh Review, January 1973.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Chapter Six.

The Concept of Guruship in Recent and Contemporary Writings.

This is a detailed representative survey of ideas found in recent studies of the Gurus. Its purpose is not to produce a comprehensive list but to indicate the variety of ideas and to provide an analysis of them. Sikh contributions will be considered first and then those of writers belonging to other traditions.

Sikh Views.

In 1966 and 1969 Sikhs celebrated the tercentenary and quincentenary of the tenth and first Gurus respectively. It may be that history will look back upon the sixties as the decade when Sikhism began to see itself once again as it did between 1580 and 1605, as one of the major world faiths, and when it was accorded the same status by the western world. However, the reason may have more to do with the large Sikh migration to Britain which coincided with the anniversaries than with those occasions themselves.

Not surprisingly the writings which were inspired by Guru Gobind Singh's life and work were confined mainly to the formation of the Khalsa [1] and to his patriotism [2] but his unity with Nanak does not go unnoticed. [3] Interestingly Dr. Taran Singh [4] after outlining the Guru's concept of God then turns immediately to the Khalsa. There is a remarkable absence of eulogy in his article. The human Guru almost seems to be a catalyst between God and God-manifest in the Khalsa. The Guru Granth Sahib receives scarcely a mention. The writer describes the God of Gobind Singh's Jap as

> "non-doing, non-vacillating, without land or garb, timeless, formless, non-bending, non-breaking, without a name, a place or a function; having no rigid dharma; invincible, fearless, colourless, and without beginning; it owns no world and knows no worry."

Later he goes on to conclude from this that the Universal Spirit belongs to all people, whatever their colour, caste, country or religion.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

> "There are no privileged people, or lands, and no superior faiths and beliefs as such. The wonderful Lord is an equalising factor in the world."

He then states,

> "The doctrine of the Khalsa or the Universal Brotherhood of the Pure, proceeds from the doctrine of the all-pervasive and indivisible ultimate Reality. The Wonderful Lord manifests himself in a wonderful drama or Vachitar Natak of the cosmos and creation. In fact all the actors in this cosmic play are Khalsa or Pure; they are all saints, and no sinners; all are devas and no daitas - just as in a staged drama, all the actors are equals and friends, but are playing various roles which are sometimes honourable and complimentary, and sometimes contemptible and sinful. --- All sinners are also saints in the making - surely they are to be redeemed, sooner or later. So the Brotherhood of the Pure is the brotherhood of the entire humanity."

Dr. Taran Singh's universalistic approach extends the whole concept of guruship in a way not found in other Sikh writers, though suggested in the Adi Granth[5] and Vachitar Natak,[6] so that God, he asserts, reveals himself as he will and no religion, not even Sikhism can claim unique and exclusive possession of the truth. The Khalsa becomes the community of all believing people of whatever faith. His interpretation, of necessity affects the status of the Sikh Gurus, the importance being put upon their work and mission rather than their personalities.

In another article, written for the quincentenary of Guru Nanak's birth Dr. Taran Singh reiterates these views and has this to say of guruship.

> "The term Guru does not imply the Sikh Gurus or saints of a particular area or time only; rather it indicates a divine institution or the eternal spark of the divine light which continuously and eternally shines, in the form of the divine word, in different localities at different times, to inspire men and to guide their destiny."[7]

He then proceeds to discuss the terms gurmat (the path shown by the Guru) and gurdarshan (the vision of Reality experienced by the Guru). Neither

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

of these, he asserts, must be interpreted in a sectarian manner. In answer to the natural question

> "What then was the contribution of the Sikh Gurus?"

he replies,

> "The Sikh Gurus once again helped the sun of dharma to rise. In such an attempt, the naturally simplified, crystalled, and chiselled the form of dharma and gave the divine Light a new lustre and shape. Gurmat is the same eternal divine Lamp, lighted by God himself and reinforced again and again by saints and gurus as willed by him."

Of the Khalsa he writes,

> "The Khalsa organisation is the culminating point of the Gurmat and Gurdarshan. It is an ideal society of mankind which consists of the philosophers, the Brahmgyanis, Gurmukhs or Sikhs. It is a society of Singhs; the liberated souls who are the guardians of humanity so that they might transform the world into the Kingdom of Heaven."

None of the writers consulted during the preparation of this study other than Guru Nanak himself in the Japji seems to have possessed or shown Dr. Taran Singh's breadth of vision. Here is the monism of the Sikh scriptures and the message of Sikhism that through Nanak God gave the bani to the Kalyug put into a total historical and cosmic context. The Sikh Gurus are not reduced in stature as they are seen to be ten men within a long line of many through whom God has revealed himself nor is the Khalsa diminished through the use of the term 'Kingdom of God'. Perhaps the new era of interfaith - dialogue prompted Dr. Taran Singh to place Sikhism within a universal dimension. In doing so one feels he has been faithful both to the scriptures and to the spirit of the Gurus as well as indicating an interesting and potential area for exploration by Sikh theologians and philosophers.

Rather more prosaic but in essence very similar to Dr. Taran Singh is the interpretation of guruship given by Professor Kohli [8] writing not to celebrate an anniversary but to present in a clear and straightforward way the basic principles of the Sikh faith. He begins by stressing the importance of the

institution of guru both in ancient India and in the Adi Granth describing him as 'perfect being' and the 'pivot of the whole of Sikh thought'.[9] He raises the question of 'the physical aspect of the Guru-Soul'[10] by which is meant human guruship and provides the following answer.

> "In the primal age, the Guru Soul was identical with Brahman. This shows that first and foremost the Guru is God himself. Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh talk of him as their Guru. When the universe was created by Brahman, the Guru-Soul pervaded the universe as Ishwara, but when Ishwara became manifest through an Enlightened Soul in a physical form it adopted several names at different times. These enlightened souls through whom the Word of God or Name spread in the universe were called Gurus. The ten Gurus of the Sikhs are the manifestations of the Guru-Soul. All the contributors of the Adi Granth experienced the manifestation of the Guru-Soul within them. Since this scripture contains the message of the Guru-Soul, his word or Bani, it was given the status of a Guru by Guru Gobind Singh. The physical form disappeared with the tenth Guru and the Guru-Soul manifested itself in the form of Word, Name or Bani. In fact the body is prone to death, but the Word lives on forever."

This, together with the visionary and imaginative statement of Dr. Taran Singh seems to be the most felicitous statement of the Sikh concept of guruship made by Sikh scholars, being most in agreement with the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib.

Slightly more sectarian in his approach but equally in agreement with the teaching of the Adi Granth is Dr. Mansukhani.[11] In common with many writers he asserts the necessity of the human guru. The Sikh Guru is described as 'a perfect man and he can convert a human being into his like'. Dr. Mansukhani then adds 'the Guru now lives in the form of the Panth and resides in the Sangat', and states that the sacred book which contains the Guru's teaching is now the Guru. As the previous two scholars did so Dr. Mansukhani maintains the unity of Guru, bani and sangat but the sangat seems to be the Sikh institution of the Khalsa rather than all who are striving to establish the Kingdom God, the bani is with the Guru Granth Sahib and the emphasis upon the human

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Guru is indicative of a natural persistent tendency within Sikhism to exalt the persons of the Ten Gurus in such a way that they can only be placed within the context of divine revelation as final saviour figures, a rôle which all except perhaps Guru Gobind Singh rejected.

Saran Singh[12] exemplifies this view most fully. Assembling material from a number of Janam Sakhis he writes of Nanak's birth.

> "The moon had travelled past its zenith and across the curve of the sky there was a singularly bright star creating the effect of twilight without any suggestion of the approaching dawn. The rays of the moon were beaming down steadfastly on the silent murky village of Talwandi, south west of the ancient city of Lahore. An unusually brilliant ray seemed to linger on a sprawling, brick built house. Inside the lamp-light shone on the face of a matronly, buxom woman lying on a bed, attended on one side by a nurse and on the other side by a couple of elderly ladies."

The nurse, a Muslim, confesses that the one who will cause sin and darkness to vanish has come. The family priest, representing Hinduism, says,

> "He will be a unique King, holding sway over vaste millions."

Saran Singh continues the story to the point where, when Nanak is ten years old a doctor is summoned to examine the boy who is so prone to meditation that he neglects his meals. Nanak tells the vaid,

> "Go and heal yourself, before you go about healing others."

The anxious father adds his witness to those of the Muslim and the Hindu,

> "Cheer up sir, your son is not sick. He will heal the sickness of mankind."

As Nanak was born a light in a murky village so, aptly, the cover of the quincentenary volume shows him haloed, left hand in the gesture of preaching, right hand expressing the one-ness of God, rising lotus-like from the world-ocean.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Sarang Singh's article may be dismissed as a paeon of praise suitable and proper in the context of a quincentenary. It is, however, also a contribution to what purports to be a serious journal of Sikh studies. What cannot be so easily disregarded is Teja Singh's statement in a book which is regarded as authoritative by Sikhs wishing to check the details of such things as the Amrit ceremony.[13]

Because Sikhism is a way of life an example is needed, hence the human Guru. However, he goes on to say that

> "The Sikh Gurus were perfect and are described as such in the scriptures."

He then quotes Guru Nanak,

> "Everyone else is subject to error, only the Guru and God are sinless." (A. G. 61).

It seems that Principal Teja Singh has fallen into the error of confusing Guru-passages referring to the Sat-Guru, that is the bani and the manifestation of Brahman with those which are about the human Guru. The difficulty of separating them as a textual exercise has been mentioned already, in chapters two and three. The solution must, it seems, be sought not through the study of a text but through an interpretation of guruship. Dr. Teja Singh uses this text for that purpose for he continues in a lengthy passage which needs to be quoted in full.

> "The Guru is sinless. In order, however, to be really effective in saving men, he must not be above man's capacity to imitate, as he would if he were a supernatural being. His humanity must be real and not feigned. He should have a nature subject to the same laws as operate in the ordinary human nature, and should have attained his perfection through the same Grace is available to all men and through obedience to God's will. The Sikh Gurus had fought against sin and had overcome it. Some of them had lived for a long time in error, until Grace touched them and they were perfected through a constant discipline of knowledge, love and experience in the association of their Gurus. When they had been completely attuned to the Will divine and were sanctified as Gurus, there remained no defect in them and they became perfect and holy. Thereafter sins did come to tempt them, but they never gave way and were always able to overcome them. It is only thus that they became perfect examples for men and transformed those who came under their influence to veritable angelic beings."

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

In Dr. Teja Singh a theological development which finds its early expression in Bhai Gurdas and Guru Gobind Singh is completed.

The human and divine or eternal aspects of guru-ship are a frequent cause of confusion. So Dr. Trilochan Singh writes[14]

> "In Hindu thought and exegesis the word guru is used loosely for a father, an ancestor, an elderly personage and a school teacher, also technically for a brahmin who performs the purificatory ceremonies. The Guru in Sikhism is the Saviour, the Prophet, the true Enlightener who is as perfect as God himself, but not God. Either the God is God-illumined from birth, or God reveals himself to him at some stage of his life when he receives the call.
>
> The Guru's inspiration descends into our consciousness through his Word (Sabad) and he can transfigure any ordinary man and make him a god in flesh."

Professor Dewan Singh manifests the same type of confusion in his introduction to the Japji.[15]

> "The idea of perfection has great spiritual significance in Sikhism. It is commonly believed that there are only two (in fact, they are one, being always united on the transcendental plane) Perfect Beings in the area of human cognition. They are God and the Guru. Since they are, mystically speaking one, not two, hence the term coined to express or denote this unity, is God-man. Spiritual perfection or, what we may call, supreme consummation of the human ideal, is the real goal before all men born on this earth. This is what Sikhism teaches as one of its foremost tenets or principles. The Guru, the great human saviour, the supreme benign and generous preceptor and guide, truly represents in his effulgent spiritual majesty, the spiritual perfection mentioned above. Without his help and graceful intercession no spiritual progress can be effectively made. All votaries have to pass through the door or portal of this spiritual sanctuary called the Guru."

In discussing the phrase 'grace of the Guru' in the Mool Mantra Professor Dewan Singh clearly indicates that it refers to a human Guru, one who has become perfect and so, alone, can bring others to perfection.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

The final statement is from Khushwant Singh.[16]

> "Although Nanak admitted of no other guru for himself save God and claimed to be God's mouthpiece, he was careful to keep God and Guru apart. The guru is mortal, not divine, he is to be loved, respected and consulted but not worshipped; he is essentially a philosopher, guide and teacher, not a re-incarnation of God, nor in any way related to him."

Although one is aware that Indian and western, (by which is really meant Christian in this context) concepts of God and man differ though Sikhism has its stress on God as creator and man as in need of grace, this is not a satisfactory explanation of the tendency represented by the last three scholars to fracture the unity which seems to be present in Nanak's concept of guru. Neglect of the two principles that Nanak was guru by virtue of the bani, the light, the flame which was entrusted to him, and for no other reason, and that this word was essentially one with God seems to be the only way of accounting for their confusion. In addition, of course, there is probably a desire to avoid the error of making the Gurus appear to be incarnations of God in either the Hindu or Christian sense.

Other Indian Scholars.

There has often been a tendency among Indian scholars when writing a commentary upon a sacred text to use the opportunity to present their own philosophy and justify it as vedantic rather than provide the type of exegesis to which westerners are accustomed. Similarly, in writing about Guru Nanak a number of Hindu writers, and Sikh present him as the man for today or as a vehicle for presenting their own philosophical or political views. Thus K. P. K. Menon[17] sees him as one with Ramakrishna and Aurobindo but also, like Gandhi having political as well as spiritual concerns, seeking to end sectarian strife and attempting to establish social equality. For Jayalal Kaul he was one who did more than any other bhakti saint to 'debrahminise Hinduism'.[18] A fifteenth century Gandhiji, perhaps surprisingly linked with the Buddha and Sankara as a great synthesiser is the view of Ram K. Vepa[19] whose contribution to an anniversary volume reminds Indians of the goal of national unity.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Dr. Sita Ram Bahri[20] also concentrates on religious harmony but also notes Nanak's place in the struggle for the emancipation of both men and women and his condemnation of capitalists (mayadhari[21]).

These examples, which could be multiplied many times by referring to articles in 'The Sikh Review' typify the Hindu approach to Nanak at the present time. In an India struggling to achieve national unity, where school text books are vetted to ensure communal fairness, and seeking as a socialist state to follow the teaching of Nehru, 'Aram haram hai'(Rest is forbidden), Nanak, the grhastha sant, with Gandhi is an example to be followed.

Two Hindu scholars do give careful attention to the Sikh concept of Guru.

In a brief article[22] Dr. C. L. Datta notes the ancient meaning of the term guru as a synonym of acharya and its medieval usage to describe a medium between man and God, perhaps owing something to the place the Shaik holds within sufism. In Sikh thought he notes that the Guru is 'the vehicle of communication between man and God.' The ultimate consummation of the Guru's work is the absorption of man in God which is done through repetition of the imparted Word or Name of the Lord to the disciple.

> "The Guru is an agent who unites individuals with God. Without repeating the Name, man cannot attain salvation, and without the Word none can be saved; yet it is the Guru alone who communicates the Word and guides one to meditate on the Name."

He concludes

> "Guru Nanak lays much emphasis on the apotheosis of the Guru; the latter occupied a very exalted position in his philosophy. The personality of the Guru is at all times operative in the career of the disciples and without his direction there can be no moral regeneration. Man's salvation lies in repeating the Word of God and the Word can only be known under the Guru's instruction. The Guru is, therefore, a major

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

> link in the chain of spiritual elevation.
> He is the only means for the attainment
> of salvation and as such is indispensable."

The phrase 'apotheosis of the Guru' seems difficult to understand. Presumably he means the deification of the Guru and by Guru he means the human line of the Ten Masters. If so, then one must draw the conclusion that he sees Nanak as being one with the Sufi Shaiks and failing to comprehend the full implications of two passages which he quotes.

> "The Guru is Siva, the Guru is Vishnu
> And Brahma; the Guru is Parvati,
> Lakshmi and Saraswati.
>
> God the first principle, the Pure One, is
> in all things; of this there is no doubt;
> Nanak hath obtained God, the Infinite
> Supreme being, as his Guru."

The famous scholar of Vedic religion, Professor Raghavan has written two articles relevant to the subject of guru-ship. In his most recent[23] he tends to concentrate upon Nanak's teaching and in particular the concept of Sabda or sabad-guru. This he relates to the unstruck sound or Ana-hatha Nada of yogic teaching. After some discussion he concludes that

> "Sabda is therefore the same highest symbol
> of the Supreme Being that the Upanishads speak
> of as Om or Pranava." [24]

Though he sees the teachings of Sikhism as monistic he regards the ethics as based on duality but in this he says there is no inconsistency.

Professor Raghavan's earlier article[25] sets Nanak firmly within the vedic tradition so far as doctrine is concerned by paralleling passages from the hymns of Guru Nanak with verses from the upanishads. He then comes to Nanak's teaching about the Guru as the means of seeing God,

> "occasionally Nanak speaks of God himself
> as the Guru par excellence, which is also in
> line with the (Indian) tradition; for after all
> God is the fountain-head of all knowledge and
> the primary Teacher. Does not Patanjali say
> of God in his Yoga Sutras that he is the teacher
> of the oldest teachers?"

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Unfortunately he does not explore this idea but reverts to the popular concept of Guru which he had earlier asserted to be the dominant one in Nanak's teaching. He continues:

> "The Guru is only one of the congregation of similar god-men, the Saints, the Sants and Sadhus, whose company (Satsanga) had always been praised as a powerful aid for cultivating and maintaining one's religion and spiritual impulses and interests."

Three pages further on, after studying the concepts of Nam and Sabda Professor Raghavan examines Nanak's conception of God. He is the One without a second, although he has many forms. He is also beyond all forms, also transcendent, manifest and immanent. Though the writer quotes the famous saying of Nanak's, 'The Guru of gurus is one' yet he does not bring together Nanak's concept of Guru with that of God. One cannot help feeling that by discussing the terms guru, nam, sabda and God separately Professor Raghavan has revealed ultimately a failure to grasp the deepest implication of Nanak's message. In his view the monism of Nanak is something which he and his successors including Guru Gobind Singh saw so clearly that an examination of his teaching which fractures this essential unity has misunderstood his intentions.

Only one relevant article written by a Muslim scholar has been located. Dr. Mujeeb[26] draws attention to the sufi tradition in Islam but it is interesting to note that he rejects it as an influence upon the Guru. By now it was no novelty in North India, it has lost its freshness and its power and the appearance of Islam in the political form of the Mogul invasion was scarcely likely to endear it to Hindus. He therefore concludes that Nanak must have experienced what sufis call an "occurence of the heart" - 'a kind of revelation by its own nature direct, independent and original.'[27]

On the issue of guruship itself he is carefully non-committal though the article as a whole probably represents his view, namely, if one may hazard a guess, that Nanak experienced the oneness of existence in such a way that all distinctions between God and man and among men disappear

in the tremendous vision of unity. However his words are cautious:-

> "Another point of resemblance is between the sufi concept of shaik and Guru Nanak's concept of the Guru. Here we are confronted with a complex pattern of parallel discussion. And perhaps the first question would be to determine what Guru Nanak meant by the term 'Guru', when he himself had no spiritual instructor or guide. Did he mean God as the eternal source of guidance and light, or an idealised human guide whoever he might be? This is a question for Sikh theologians and philosophers to settle or decide not to settle."[28]

As the introduction of this thesis states, the latter question is the fundamental one to which this thesis has addressed itself, partly provoked by these words of Dr. Mujeeb's. The former must await attention of someone well equipped with knowledge of both sufism and the Sikh religion. So far no Sikh writer seems to have risen to Dr. Mujeeb's challenge. His second question is one they consider they have settled rather than one they would say they had decided not to settle.

Western Views.

The Sikh religion has not attracted the attention of many western scholars and of the available books in print it is interesting but a little alarming to discover that four are reprints of nineteenth or early twentieth century works.

In chronological order the symposium to which John Malcolm, J. D. Cunningham and M. A. Macauliffe contributed must receive first mention.[29] The articles have little bearing on the concept of guruship though John Malcolm's, a reprint of one published in Asiatic Researches in 1810, seems to be the first which draws attention to the words of Bhai Gur Das Bhale 'Guru Govind appeared as the tenth avatar.' This statement John Malcolm accepted as Gobind Singh's belief and J. D. Cunningham transmitted it[30] in a book which, one feels, owes a heavy debt to the earlier scholar. Professor Parrinder refers to the same article as recently as 1970.[31] However, J. D. Cunningham rejected the avatar interpretation of the Tenth Guru's life stating that 'he said, he had been

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

manifested but he was only as other men, the servant of the supreme, a beholder of the wonders of creation and whosoever worshipped him as the Lord should assuredly burn in the everlasting flame.'[32] (The italics are Cunningham's).

Captain Cunningham was intent on writing a history, not a theological study of Sikhism.[33] However, in the process he recognised not only Gobind Singh's rejection of the belief in himself as an avatar, but also Nanak's emphasis on God as formless and on the doctrine that God lies beyond all sectarianism.[34] For him Nanak and the early Gurus were seeking to represent this God, whom they called Truth, to mankind rather than trying to commend themselves or found a religion, and even Guru Gobind Singh's apparent sectarianism was to be understood in the context of his nationalism.[35]

Ernest Trumpp was almost willful in his misunderstanding of Sikhism. Commissioned by the British government to translate the Adi Granth he first alienated the Sikhs and then proceeded with his undertaking despite a lack of braj bhasa the Hindi dialect in which it was written. Time has proved his reliance on sanskrit and modern punjabi to have been too great.

Professor Trumpp seems to have regarded almost all 'guru' passages in the scriptures as referring to the human Gurus. 'Remarkable it is, but quite in accordance with the pantheistic principles of the system, that prayer to the Supreme is hardly ever mentioned in the Granth, whereas prayer to the Guru is frequently enjoined.'[36] He therefore concludes,

> "The high position which the Guru claimed for himself, naturally led to a deification of the same, and though Nanak spoke modestly of himself and confessed himself as unlearned and lowest of sinners, the following Gurus soon commenced, owing to the abject flattery of their adherents, to identify the Guru with the Supreme himself. The consequence was such a deification of man as has hardly ever been heard of elsewhere. Life, property and honour were sacrificed to the Guru in a way which is often revolting to our moral feelings. It was therefore a very fortunate event for the more free and moral development of the Sikh community that, with the tenth Guru, Gobind Singh, the Guruship was altogether abolished."

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

How Professor Trumpp could arrive at these views when, in his own translation he contradicts them is inconceivable unless the conclusion is drawn that he had developed such a bigotted attitude towards the Sikh faith that the evidence of the scriptures was not even noticed. To take only a few random examples he gives such readings as 'The Guru, the Supreme Lord,' 'The Guru is formless (or the formless Supreme Being), high inaccessible, infinite,'[37] 'by the True Guru, the Supreme Spirit, (I am) united, like him there is none other,'[38] 'the friend is the Guru, the Supreme Spirit.'[39]

It is to be hoped that Dr. Trumpp's introduction will be ignored by those who use his translation, but as it is the only version of the Adi Granth in English available in most bookshops and libraries there is some cause for apprehension. An urgent need exists for a scholarly annotated Sikh version of the Adi Granth in English which will make this translation redundant and at the same time meet the requirements of Sikhs who are unable to use the gurmukhi original - a quickly growing number.

With M. A. Macauliffe[40] western studies of Sikhism enter a new phase. His massive three volume study may be misleading and uncritical[41] but at least it is sympathetic and was produced with the assistance of Sikh gyanis. His rendering of the writings of Guru Gobind Singh is still the only one which most people can use, the linguistic nature of the Dasam Granth being even beyond most Sikhs. However, M. A. Macauliffe nowhere provides a detailed discussion of guruship, his understanding of it has to be pieced together from occasional comments including footnotes. For him Sikhism contains both pantheistic and theistic elements. God is personal and without form (nirankar).[42] He is also the one being existing in everything and from which all creation has emanated. The word Guru generally stands for God, in a secondary sense it is applied to a great religious teacher.[43]

J. C. Archer's book is shot through with comments upon the guruship as found in the Ten Gurus, the Khalsa and the Adi Granth. To summarise his views is not easy but he seems to provide they key in the

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

in the title of chapter four, 'Nanak: the Factual and the Formless.' By factual he means the historical Nanak, but he expresses the opinion that there were two Nanaks,

> "He was an historical person; he is also a theological construction. He is what Indians and the world in general think of him; he is also what Sikhs think of him - he is historico-theological to them." 44

The latter is 'Nanak Nirankari', (without form), which may mean legendary 45 but may also be applied to the spirit of Nanak, that is his influence and his teaching. In pauri thirty-seven of the Japji the word occurs in the following line

> 'The formless (Nirankari) commends the way of truth." 46

Clearly it cannot mean 'legendary' here. In fact later J. C. Archer says

> "by his death Guru Nanak became Nanak Nirankari, a spirit rather than a mere man, passing into legend out of history and virtually bequeathing to his followers the problem of succession, that is Guruship."

J. C. Archer would appear to possess an uncertain understanding of guruship, the result of centralising his thoughts upon Guru Nanak. 'Nanak Nirankari' need not mean 'the formless Nanak' but 'Nanak, worshipper of the formless' just as 'Baba Ram Singh Namdhari' means 'worshipper of Nam' and 'Keshdari' means one who observes the rule of uncut hair. Nanak Nirankari is the gurbani which existed before the first Guru and which was proclaimed by his successors. Elsewhere he speculates on the term Wahiguru which he translates as 'Hail, Guru'. Commenting on the attitude which a critical visitor to the Tarn Taran gurdwara might have, where the word is written on the wall together with Satnam and pictures of Hindu deities he writes,

> "If one were really very critical, me might not only wonder at these deities. He might also call the title Wahiguru into question as it is in itself an elevation of the Guru to the level of God and, in consequence a confusion of God and the Guru - unless, indeed, the intention was to indicate that God himself is actually the Guru.' " 47

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

This is the intention, Wahiguru does not mean 'Hail Guru', it means 'Wonderful Lord' and is a name given to God.[48] One final example of his uncertain handling of the question of guruship must be noted. Of the last Guru he writes 'Gobind may indeed have offered himself as the final avatara, since he was the tenth in the Sikhs' own line - and ten represented the ultimate in all Hindu reckoning. But he did not attribute to himself divinity.'[49] Unless the Sikh concept of avatar is explained, and it is not, this statement is incomprehensible. In his own glossary J. C. Archer describes an avatar as 'a descent of deity, an incarnation.'[50]

Dr. Loehlin's important examination of the Dasam Granth has already been noted in chapter three. He also refers to the concept of guruship in The Christian Approach to the Sikh. Here three uses of the word 'Guru' are given. He is God by whose grace alone a person is delivered from 'the merciless chain' of rebirths[51] (a paradox which the author does not explain). He is also the human Guru who is not regarded as an incarnation of deity, but a human person supremely developed spiritually; and Sikhism also believes that the Word of God is the Guru' Thus the Sat Guru, the human Guru and the gurbani have been brought together but their relationship is not explained. Indeed, Dr. Loehlin concludes this section with two setences from an article by Principal Jodh Singh which taken out of context leave the whole meaning of the word Guru in some doubt: The Guru communicates his ideas through the Word. Sikhism, therefore, believes that it is the Word of the Guru that is the Guru. Hence the tenth Guru said that after him the Guru Granth Sahib would be the Guru of the Panth.[52]

This book provoked an interesting reaction in the form of a review written by Pamela Wylam,[53] a convert to the Sikh faith. On page twenty-nine Dr. Loehlin had mentioned Guru Nanak's 'enlightenment', to which Mrs. Wylam retorted 'Sikhs believe that Guru Nanak was born already enlightened; his ideas were already formulated before he received the "call" and any further contacts which he had with other religions during his travels could not have had any further influence on the Sikh religion'. Mrs. Wylam clearly stands within the tradition of Sarangh Singh and Teja Singh noted earlier in this chapter.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

The most important western contribution to the study of Sikhism is that of Professor Hew McLeod, the historian from New Zealand.[54] Not only has he produced a succint and comprehensive account of the teachings of Guru Nanak he has also approached the Guru's biography in an unprecedented way, one unfamiliar to oriental writers, and one which has stimulated a tremendous and hostile Sikh reaction which may continue for another decade. This is unfortunate as the second part of the book is an excellent introduction to Nanak's theology.[55]

Professor McLeod is careful to point out that his analysis is confined to the theology of the first Guru and not to Sikhism[56] and therefore he confines himself to the Nanak sabads of the Adi Granth. He begins by discussing Nanak's view of the nature of God and before turning to his treatment of the concept of Guru a few comments must be made on this. He sees Nanak as a monotheist rather than a monist,[57] whose God is both nirguna and saguna.[57] The monotheist conclusion is reached by comparing Nanak's thought with the advaita doctrines of Sankara. However, for the Guru God is one without a second, there is no other,[59] even if he is transcendent he is also immanent and the ultimate destiny of man is to be reabsorbed in God. In answer to the Siddhas' question, 'Whence has man come, whither does he go and wherein does he merge?' the Guru replied, 'Man emerges from God's will, quits as God wills and merges too as God wills.'[60] The language of absorption and merging with God is popular with Nanak and his successors. He can write

> "If God shows mercy one meditates on him and one's soul is dissolved and is absorbed in him. It becomes one with the Supreme Soul and the inner duality dies within."[61]

This duality is itself unreal for elsewhere Nanak says,

> "Everyone is blessed with a soul and the soul is God himself who pervades everything and everywhere."[62]

Taking Professor McLeod's point nevertheless Nanak's emphasis on overall unity so that Sikhism has no eschatological doctrine is such that even the professor has to qualify and explain his statement that Nanak's affirmation of unity is monotheistic rather than monistic.[63]

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

So also with his assertion that Nanak's God is both nirguna and saguna.[64] The Guru does use the words nirguna and saguna in the same verse of Siddha Gosht[65] but for Nanak saguna refers to such qualities as the love, mercy and graciousness of God, not to the common bhakti belief in avatars. Perhaps the problem is that in Nanak we have someone who used the religious vocabulary of his day but considered himself free to modify its meaning. Therefore, it is essential to consider his general ideas rather than particular verses, hence the preference for monism and nirguna when outlining his concept of God.

Professor McLeod's analysis of Nanak's use of the term Guru deflects attention from the human teacher to Kabir's use of the word to represent

> "the inner voice, the mystical movement of God in the depths of the individual being, the light of God shed abroad in the inmost recesses of the human soul." 66

By so doing Professor McLeod is not suggesting any personal link between Kabir and Nanak, indeed he has already expressed his doubt about any meetings or direct influence.[67] Instead he points to the common sant tradition which both typify. He notes that for Nanak the Guru is essential but then provides a number of quotations to show that this Guru is none other than God himself, both for Nanak and for his successors,[68] finally stating however,

> "A strict definition requires us to identify the Guru not with God himself but with the voice of God, with the means whereby God imparts the truth to men." 69

Here one feels, Professor McLeod has penetrated to the heart of Nanak's concept of guruship, shared by his successors. The Guru is God, the voice of God, the Word, the Truth of God, the Guru is the means by which God manifests himself to men and graciously delivers them. The Professor has been criticised for diminishing the place and status of Nanak.[70] Instead, it may be argued, he has liberated the concept of Guru so that the unitary nature of the God of Sikh thought may find expression in another unity, that of scriptures, that of the ideal community, that of all prophets and seers who have ever disclosed God to mankind. When those who attempted

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

to separate what they considered to be the spirit of Jesus from the historical Jesus or from the sectarian claim of Christianity, as they regarded them, they were beset by the assertion of the uniqueness of Jesus and the Incarnation. Nanak and the other Gurus did not claim to have entered history in such a unique way, they were part of the story of God's unending, gracious proclamation of liberation. They were servants but not saviours, guides and not mediators. Another generation of Sikhs might therefore recognise that Professor McLeod has performed a valuable service in referring them to the rich concept of guruship found in the teachings of Nanak and by implication questioning the restrictive Nanak cult which, for most Sikhs, seems to have replaced it. However, it will be many years before this happens, perhaps as a result of inter-faith dialogue and an awareness of Sikhism's potential as a world religion. One thing is certain, only when a Sikh scholar arrives at Professor McLeod's conclusions will Sikhism accept them. To Sikhs his efforts have been an attempt not to discover the truth but to undermine the faith.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

The Concept of Guruship in Recent and Contemporary Writings.

Footnotes to Chapter Six.

1. Harbans Singh, Sikh Courier, volume 4 number 3, 1966, p. 4.
2. Nihal Singh, ibid, p. 13.
3. Pamela Wylam, ibid, p. 22.
4. Dr. Taran Singh, ibid, p. 29.
5. Japji passim, A. G. p. 12, p. 223, p. 929.
6. Vachitar Natak, Loehlin, p. 30.
7. Guru Nanak, 1969, p. 54.
8. Outlines of Sikh Thought, New Delhi, 1966.
9. ibid, p. 89.
10. ibid, p. 90.
11. Quintessence of Sikhism, S. G. P. C., Amritsar, 1965.
12. Sikh Review, Quincentenary Volume, 1969, p. 36. One might compare this with the approach of Dr. Mansukhani, Life of Guru Nanak, 1974.
13. Sikhism, Its Ideals and Institutions, Orient Longman, 1964, (reprint).
14. Guru Nanak, 1969, p. 108.
15. Guru Nanak's Message in the Japji, 1970, p. 74.
16. Hymns of Guru Nanak, Orient Longmans, 1969, p. 33.
17. Guru Nanak, Government of India, 1969, p. 184.
18. ibid, p. 113.
19. ibid, p. 81.
20. Guru Nanak, New Delhi, 1969.
21. ibid, p. 180, a mayadhari is literally one who is a devotee of maya.
22. Papers on Guru Nanak, Punjab History Conference Proceedings, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1969.
23. Guru Nanak : A Homage, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, 1973, p. 197.
24. ibid, p. 209.
25. Guru Nanak, Government of India, 1969, p. 18.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

26. Guru Nanak, New Delhi, 1969, p. 114.
27. ibid, p. 116.
28. ibid, p. 121.
29. Sikhism : a Symposium, reprinted by S. Gupta, 1958.
30. A History of the Sikhs, second edition, reprinted 1915.
31. Parrinder 1970, p. 96.
32. Cunningham 1915, p. 33.
33. ibid, introduction.
34. ibid, pp. 38, 329 - 340.
35. ibid, pp. 60 - 62, 75 - 76.
36. The Adi Granth, 1877, Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, second edition 1970, Introduction p. cx.
37. ibid, p. 73.
38. ibid, p. 101.
39. ibid, p. 53.
40. The Sikh Religion, 1909, reprint O.U.P. 1963.
41. W. H. McLeod, World Religions Aids for Teachers, second edition, 1973, p. 66.
42. Macauliffe 1963, introduction volume one, p. lxiii.
43. ibid, volume 1, p. 4 footnote 3.
44. The Sikhs 1946, p. 57.
45. ibid, p. 63.
46. ibid, p. 132, see also p. 133.
47. ibid, p. 30.
48. 'Wahiguru ji ka Khalsa, wahiguru ji ki fateh' is sometimes translated 'hail to the victorious Khalsa', it can also be interpreted as "The wonderful Lord, the Khalsa, the Victorious." For the origins of the term see Macauliffe, volume 2, p. 107 and volume 4, p. 135. note 2.
49. Cunningham 1946, p. 201.
50. ibid, p. 337.
51. Christian Approach to the Sikh, Edinburgh House Press, 1966, p. 48.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

52. ibid, p. 30 quoting Jodh Singh, The Sikhs and their Scriptures, ed. Loehlin, 1964.
53. Sikh Courier, volume 4 no. 1, 1966, p. 27.
54. Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion, O.U.P., 1968.
55. ibid, p. 150.
56. ibid, p. 163.
57. ibid, p. 165.
58. ibid, p. 167.
59. A.G. pp. 12, 357.
60. A.G. p. 940.
61. A.G. p. 661.
62. A.G. p. 1273 cf. Kohli 1966 chapters two and three on the doctrines of Brahman and Jiva.
63. McLeod 1968, p. 165.
64. ibid, pp. 167 - 168.
65. A.G. p. 94.
66. McLeod 1968, p. 197.
67. below p. 86.
68. McLeod pp. 198 - 199.
69. ibid, p. 199.
70. Trilochan Singh 1969 passim, also innumerable articles in the Sikh Review and Sikh Courier.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Chapter Seven.

Conclusions.

From a study of the life and teachings of Guru Nanak it seems clear that he neither acknowledged nor possessed a human guru but belonged to what Professor McLeod has described as 'a loose fellowship of believers in a supreme non-incarnated God'.[1] The sants of this tradition denied their indebtedness to a guru not in order to exalt themselves but to emphasise the immediacy of their relationship with God, the Satguru or Adiguru.

In the Guru Granth Sahib and the writings of the Tenth Master there is a general unity and agreement. Throughout these primary documents of the Sikh faith there is a coherent doctrine which might be called monistic theism. The created world emanates from God and is part of him. It will return to him and be re-absorbed.[2] Such also, is the destiny of man. Ik, One, the first word of the Mool Mantra is the basic principle of Sikhism to which all the Gurus remained faithful. If this monistic interpretation of Sikhism is correct one has a basis upon which the whole fabric of Sikh doctrine may be constructed as well as a firm criterion for evaluating assessments of the religion. Further work on the two Granths might be worthwhile to test this assertion, one to which Sikhs firmly adhere and which has been borne out in this study.

If this principle is accepted the sabad or bani cannot be regarded as distinct from God. Professor Raghavan in the article already referred to in chapter six[3] has probably provided the key to understanding the Sikh concept of bani when he links it to the unstruck sound (or Ana - hatha Nada) of yogic teaching. The bani is the sound which emanates from God. It is the Om of ancient Indian tradition, hence the emphasis in Guru Nanak's teaching upon hearing and uttering, and the importance of kirtan and the ritual of reading the Adi Granth from beginning to end as an aspect of Sikh devotion. Kirtan is not merely the singing of hymns, it is coming within the sound of God which, even if not fully understood may calm, heal, and liberate. In the scriptures themselves it is the bani and the repetition of Nam which emancipates, not knowledge.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

In Sikhism there are three ways in which this view of the bani has been developed. First, the sound becomes articulated in and mediated through persons, Gurus, and consequently emphasis is placed upon them more than upon the bani which they were given to utter. Both Bhai Gurdas, in his Var quoted on page 100 and Guru Gobind Singh in Vachitar Natak (quoted page 96) hold different beliefs about guruship to that of Guru Nanak. He was 'a bard out of work', summoned to God's court and sent back into the world to deliver God's message. As the bani came to him so he made it known (A. G. 722); he spoke only when God inspired him to speak (A. G. p. 566). Bhai Gurdas presents a different doctrine of the origin of Nanak. He was not born as a consequence of karma but of the divine hukam. He had attained perfection and was a liberated being, 'hearing mankind's cry the Beneficient Lord sent Guru Nanak into the world.' In the Var the river Bein experience is a commissioning when Nanak 'received grace at the court of God'[4] not an initial calling. Nanak received his vocation before he was born. This belief, of course, also underlies the janam sakhis in which Nanak's birth and childhood is accompanied by portents and wonders. In Vachitar Natak Guru Gobind Singh applies the teaching of Bhai Gurdas to himself, so he is Guru by God's command rather than by enlightenment. Whether Guru Arjan held this view of his son Hargobind cannot be said from the available evidence[5] and it must be remembered that although the legend of the Sodhi dynasty grew and was encouraged by Guru Gobind Singh[6] nevertheless it was still possible for the guruship to pass to a mild, devout man not at all assertive of a predestined vocation, Guru Tegh Bahadur. However, it seems that some modification must be placed upon the claim of Satta and Balwand, representing traditional Sikh doctrine, that the light was the same, only the form changed from Guru to Guru. The doctrine of Guru underwent at least this one important change.

This process continues. It is to be found in the value which Teja Singh attached to the sinless and perfect character of Guru Nanak and to the devotion which is given to the ten Gurus by Sikhs. Scarcely a Sikh home does not have a picture of Nanak and Gobind Singh and often especially at festival times, these are garlanded or surrounded by Christmas tree lights. The writings which accompanied the quincentenary of Nanak's birth express this devotion freely. As a result, as has been noted, there is frequently a tendency to confuse the messenger

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

with the message in such a way that Sikh writers themselves, as well as westerners like Trumpp have failed to come to a coherent view of guruship and fractured the essential monism of Guru Nanak. One suspects that a consequence of Professor McLeod's search for the historical Nanak will be an attempt to reinstate the Guru and will be undertaken in such a way that the break, instead of being healed is aggravated to the point where the bani cannot be heard above the clamour of Sikhs eager to defend their Guru against impiety and doing so to the point where their fidelity to the teachings of Nanak becomes doubtful. A detailed comparison of the concepts of guruship contained in the janam sakhis with that found in the hymns of Guru Nanak might be a more worthwhile study than the attempt to defend the accounts which tell of Nanak visiting Mecca, Sri Lanka, or Baghdad. Professor McLeod's book could have focussed attention on the message of the janam sakhis, instead it has provoked Sikhs to defend their historical reliability, fearing that the reputation of Nanak was at stake.

Perhaps when argument about the nature of the janam sakhis and their reliability has died down it will be found that the ground has been cleared for a more profitable exercise (from the theological point of view), that of analysing the contribution which they make to the concept of guruship and also the impact which they have had upon Sikh devotional attitudes towards Nanak. It is possible, and one suspects likely, that the Nanak of faith is derived not from the scriptures but from these accounts which are reminiscent of the Buddhist Jataka Mala or the Puranas of Vaisnavism and which may have been intended to provide the Sikhs with an alternative mythology to these as well as, to a much lesser extent, something corresponding to Muslim lives of the Prophet.

The second way in which the concept of gurbani has been developed is through encapsulating the sound within a book, the scriptures, now called the Guru Granth Sahib. Originally, before 1708, the Adi Granth may have been a devotional collection and an assertion by the Sikhs that they too were People of the Book. The inclusion of Hindu and Muslim writings may have been a way of attempting to attract both Hindus and Muslims to the new faith, it was also implicitly acknowledging that the bani had been uttered in India before the time of

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Nanak and so affirming the teaching of the first Guru himself.[7] However, just as the gurbani has been fractured in such a way that the human Guru is emphasised more than the eternal word so the bani may cease to be the teaching or sound and become the Book. Perhaps a personal reminiscence may be permitted to illustrate this point. When the present writer wished to buy the eight volume gurmukhi - punjabi - english parallel version of the Adi Granth from the Leeds gurdwara the executive committee met to consider the request and agreed to the sale partly on the basis of personal friendship but also because he was known to be a non-smoker. The volumes were wrapped in cloth and he was asked to keep them in a clean place and treat them with respect.[8] This is not altogether dissimilar to the debates which preceded the translation of the Adi Granth into English in the nineteenth century.

In a recent article Sahib Ardaman Singh has noted and deplored the worship of the Adi Granth.[9] In it, after emphasising that the sabad is the guru he writes

> "We are becoming plain and blatant Book Worshippers. They have started at some places to wrap the Holy Granth in warm clothes during winter and switch on the fan in summer. They draw curtains around the Guru Granth Sahib and place Parshad inside so that it could feed in privacy. They even lull the Holy Volume to sleep by placing it on swinging beds. Thanks, Satguru, they have not yet started to bathe the Holy Book; though at some places tooth picks and a jug of water are placed under it at night."...
>
> ... "The Satguru has left no stone unturned to save us from such heresies (of Book worship). Of all other things the Holy Volume which was present at Nanded is not traceable. If it had been available we would have become confirmed Book worshippers long ago. Its disappearance is an obvious mystic mercy that the Satguru has taken on us."

He concludes by saying that it is the 'gurshabad' not the book or the Khalsa which is 'the reigning Guru amongst the Sikhs'.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Thirdly, the bani became manifest in the sangat. Ideally this was the community of all faithful people, numbering those Hindus and Muslims who has passed beyond sectarianism as well as Sikhs. Eventually, in response to history the Sikhs themselves acquired the formal characteristics which Guru Nanak had deplored. So the mystical sangat became the Khalsa. In Taran Singh's article considered above (page 123), the Khalsa is described as

> .. "the brotherhood of the pure, not a community but the entire humanity. .. The Khalsa of the Punjab is one nucleus for the universal brotherhood of the pure. All other churches: Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, and others are similar. They are not mutually contradictory or exclusive but supplementary. They are attempts in co-ordination to organise the same universal brotherhood of the pure. The ultimate vision of all the prophets of the world is the same - a society of the pure, a humanity which is all pure and good."

However, only a few lines further on he is found defending the Keshas.

> "The symbol of the Keshas, which every soldier of the fraternity of the Khalsa is ordained to carry is the insignia, standard and flag to symbolise these ideals."[10]

The foregoing arguments might be summarised as follows. In the teachings of the Guru Brahman is the unmanifest, unknowable, the formless, one without a second.[11] However, as in some of the creation myths and the teachings of the upanishads Brahman wished to manifest itself and so the universe emerged so, in Sikhism, it is in the nature of God to disclose himself. The revelatory aspect of Brahman is named by Nanak the Sat Guru who is thus personalised and described as gracious (gur prasadi). The means of God's self-disclosure is by sound which becomes audible and coherent as the bani, hence the one who hears the gurbani and responds to it ceases to be man mukh and becomes gurmukh, attuned to God, in essence one with him and one with all other members of the ideal sangat and ultimately part of the godhead, Brahman, never to be re-born. Thus, logically all dualism, sectarianism and inequality disappear.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

In this process the human Guru is no more, and no less, than the one through whom the word becomes audible. He is not to be revered for his person but for what he says. Moksha in Sikhism is the inversion of the process of revelation. The egocentric and self-willed (man mukh) becomes god-centred (gurmukh) through grace which may reach him through the sangat, a human guru, or sacred writings and which lead him to the Satguru whom he recognises to be pure being. This seems to be the statement of the Mool Mantra. Through the self-initiated activity of Brahman humanity comes to the One describable only in abstract or negative terms and ultimately ineffable, to be experienced and worshipped, not explained.

The story of Sikhism, however, is that of a unitary and coherent concept which, under the constraints of culture and history became sectarian. Under Ram Das it came to possess a city of the Sikhs, Ramdaspur, later Amritsar. Here the Darbar Sahib of Arjan, with the newly compiled Adi Granth, became a pilgrimage centre. In private devotion if not theologically it came to hold for the Sikh the place of Mecca and Benares for Muslims and Hindus.[12] With Guru Hargobind political separatism came to dominate the development of Sikhism though its spiritual destinty was not lost and in Guru Gobind Singh the two were explicitly combined. The consequences of this process has been the creation of a secure and proud identity accompanied by a dynamism surpassed by none in the Indian sub-continent, but at the expense of the universal vision of the Gurus.

The difference between the monistic, supra-sectarian teachings of Nanak and the distinctive religion which manifests itself in the Khalsa is perhaps as issue for Sikhism itself in the late twentieth century less in the context of dialogue, to which Sikh thought could have something distinctive to offer, than in that of Sikhism becoming a world-wide faith attracting to itself non-punjabis. So far, and the existing evidence is from the United States, there has been no reluctance to adopt the Kesh and the turban. Between 20,000 and 50,000 Americans are reputed to have embraced the Sikh faith.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Returning to the academic study of Sikhism, this examination of the concept of guruship has drawn attention to a number of further areas of useful research.

First, Professor McLeod has analysed the janam sakhis as an historian. Their theological contribution still awaits consideration. Here, together with a consideration of the gur bani as the eternal sound, one is conscious of touching upon the mystical element of Sikhism and that which perhaps comes closest to sacramentalism. Clearly in popular devotion and in the Gurus' teachings to hear the word was itself a means of grace and devotion to the personal Gurus came to have the same significance and still does.

Secondly, these popular attitudes towards the human Gurus and the Guru Granth Sahib, from a sociological and anthropological point of view, would be worthy of study but would demand a profound knowledge of Sikh theology as well as the ability to obtain the views of the majority of Sikh devotees rather than those who are theologically trained and highly educated.

Thirdly, the yogis receive as much attention from Guru Nanak (and the other Gurus, notably the fifth and tenth) as the Pharisees did from Jesus. Their vocabulary, practices and outlook were so well known to the Gurus that the nature of the relationship which existed between them seems to warrant special attention.

Finally, the view expressed in this study that the theology of Guru Nanak was coherently monistic might itself be an hypothesis which western scholars might test, not from the secondary sources of books written by Sikh scholars but from the primary evidence of the Adi Granth. The ultimate conclusion of this piece of research is that the teaching of Guru Nanak is coherent and monistic and that the concept of guruship is only intelligible if it is understood within this context.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Inm 152.

Footnotes to the Conclusions.

1. McLeod 1968 p. 245.
2. The Sikh concept of maya is consequently not the same as that of Hinduism. See McLeod 1968, pp. 185 - 187, and Kohli 1966, pp. 32 - 35.
3. above, p. 132.
4. Stanza 24, p. 33, Panjab Past and Present, volume 3, 1969.
5. above pp. 82 - 83.
6. Vachitar Natak Macauliffe 1963, volume 5, p. 290.
7. A.G. p. 357, cf. p. 142.
8. See also Dr. K. S. Aujla's review of A Sikh Family in Britain, Sikh Courier, volume 7, No. 2, Autumn 1973, pp. 27 - 29.
9. Spokesman Weekly, twenty-third annual number, 1974, pp. 19 - 21.
10. Sikh Courier, Anniversary number, 1966 p. 34.
11. e.g. A.G. pp. 2, 64, 349, 660, 908.
12. Archer 1946 p. 26.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Glossary.

ad (Adi): first, original.

akal: Timeless, a term used to describe God, sometimes used as a name of God.

akali: literally a worshipper of the Timeless God. Used of the Sikhs of Banda Singh Bahadur who, after 1708 worked for the overthrow of the Moguls. Custodians of the Akal Takht who did not recognise the authority of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Since 1922 a movement dedicated to the recovery of Sikh shrines (successful Gurdwara Act 1925) and regarding itself as the voice of Sikhism especially in political matters. Britain and other countries in which Sikhs have settled have an elected body, the Shiromani Akali Dal.

Akal Takht: Literally the throne of the Timeless One. Originally the Amritsar palace of Guru Hargobind, its builder, now one of the four seats of Sikh spiritual authority, the others being at Anandpur Sahib, Patna Sahib, and Nanded. Its custodian (jathedar) is an employee of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. The main feature of the Akal Takht is a throne three times higher than the Mogul throne balcony in the Red Fort at Delhi, a symbol of Sikh sovereignty.

akhand Path: A continuous reading of the Guru Granth Sahib taking forty-eight hours. Associated with occasions of great sorrow or joy and a means of observing Sikh festivals (gurpurbs).

amrit: nectar of immortality. Name given to sugar crystal (patasha) and water solution used at the initiation (pahul) ceremony.

ananda: bliss, a quality or attribute of God and therefore a one who has realised moksha.

Ardas: An important Sikh prayer used at the conclusion of a service.

assan: seat. Term used by namdharis to describe the cushion of the current satguru as distinguished from the gaddi of the absent satguru Ram Singh.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

BAISAKHI
Baisakhi: first month of the year
First month of the year according to some Indian calendars. Spring harvest. One of the great Sikh festivals marked by an animal fair at Amritsar.

balihari: sacrifice, supreme devotion.

bani: speech, confined to the compositions of the Gurus and the other bhagats included in the Guru Granth Sahib.

bedi: the jati or clan of Guru Nanak, belonging to the Kshatrya varna.

bhagat: a devotee or exponent of bhakti. Used as a general term for the Hindu and Muslim sants whose compositions are included in the Guru Granth Sahib.

bhai: brother, normally restricted to describe men of outstanding piety in the Sikh faith, e.g. Bhai Buddha, bhai Gur Das.

bija mantra: seed mantra, basic thought form.

chakra: wheel or circle, the six centres in the spinal column which are opened by hatha yoga in the process of realising enlightenment.

chattri: umbrella, canopy over Guru Granth Sahib, symbol of honour.

charn pahul: foot initiation. The foot of the guru is placed in water which is then given to the initiate to drink and/or sprinkled on his face, eyes and hair. The Sikh method of initiation until it was replaced by amrit pahul.

charn puja: foot worship: touching or kissing the feet: performed by anyone to his social or family superior (e.g. son to father) or as a sign of respect (e.g. to an elderly person) but especially by a disciple to his guru. The idea lies behind the custom of many Sikhs to touch the step of the gurdwara upon entering it.

chela: the disciple of a guru, used as a synonym for sishya.

dakshima: a voluntary fee given to a guru or to a priest for performing some rite or giving instruction.

'arshan: view, vision; sight of a holy person or important person (e.g. King - Emperor George V) believed to bestow spiritual power or virtue

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

das: slave, often suffix to name of a devotee, e.g. Tulsi Das, Ram Das.

dasam duar: tenth door, the other nine being the natural openings of the body. The tenth is a mystical one opening to perfect bliss.

Dasam Granth: collection of writings attributed to the Tenth Guru and made by bhai Mani Singh twenty or thirty years after the Guru's death.

dharmsala: commonly a hostel or inn. Among namdhari Sikhs a place of worship which has not been visited by a Guru.

diksha: initiation of a disciple by a guru, often including the giving of a mantra.

Diwali: a major Hindu festival falling at the beginning of the light part of the month Kartick (October - November). A time of Sikh assembly.

Diwan: court, name given to a Sikh act of worship.

flag: Nishan sahib. a saffron or blue flag bearing the Sikh symbols of the chakra and khanda should be flown from a high point on every gurdwara to indicate a rallying point for Sikhs and a place of shelter for travellers.

gadi (gaddi): seat or throne of a guru.

Gayatri: the most famous example of a mantra, called 'the mother of the Vedas' and found in the Rig Veda 3.62.10.

giani (gyani): a person well-read in the Sikh scriptures, a teacher.

Gorakh: literally supporter of the earth, a thirteenth century yogi around whom many legends have accrued, reputed to be one of the nine perfect ones (siddhas) who have attained immortality.

gosht: a discourse.

Govind: literally giver of enlightenment.

granth: collection.

granthi: one who looks after the Guru Granth Sahib (and should therefore be able to read it) and may also be custodian of the gurdwara.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

gurdwara: literally the door of the guru, consequently a building in which the scriptures are housed. May refer to a room in a private house or to a place of public worship.

gurmukh: literally the guru's word. One who follows the Guru.

Gurmukhi: the script in which the Guru Granth Sahib is written.

gurpurb: anniversary of the birth or death of a Guru, usually observed by an akhand path.

guru: literally gu = darkness, ru = light, so one who delivers a person from ignorance by giving him the message which liberates and the technique to realise it.

gurukripa: the grace of the Guru.

gurupades: the teaching of the Guru.

hatha-yoga: yoga of force. Frequently in the west regarded as physical exercises of a complex nature. In Hinduism these are a means to the progressive release of stores of psychic energy.

haumai: self, self-centredness, a word which sums up the nature of unregenerate man.

haveli: house, place of worship.

hukam: order, command, used in Qur'an 18[26].

janam-sakhi: a tradition biography, literally birth evidences or life-evidences.

jap: repetition - of the name of God or of a mantra.

jat: a Punjabi Sikh peasant class.

julaha: weaver jati to which Kabir belonged, officially regarded as Muslim.

kach: kacha: short trousers worn instead of the dhoti, one of the 5 K's

Kaliyug: Kalyug: the fourth and last cosmic age, literally related to the losing throw at dice. Kali means 'strife', battle', sometimes writers describe the Kalyug as the age of iron following the Greek tradition. The age is supposed to last for 432,000 years and is characterised by the deficiency of dharma. Instead of Karma-marga and jnana-marga, bhakti-marga will be that most followed.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

khanda ka amrit: Sikh form of initiation introduced by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699.

kangha: comb, one of the 5 Ks.

kara: the steel band worn on the right wrist, one of the 5 Ks.

karah parshad: parshad (the gift of God to his devotees) prepared in an iron bowl (karah). Made of flour, sugar and ghee in equal proportions. Shared at the end of Sikh gatherings to symbolise casteless equality and brotherhood.

karahi: iron bowl.

kesh: uncut hair, one of the 5 Ks.

keshdari: literally one who wears the hair long or uncut. An initiated Sikh.

khalsa: the Pure Ones. The brotherhood of initiated Sikhs.

khalsa diwan: the name given to the Singh Sabha of Amritsar founded in 1883.

? khand path: term used to describe a ritual complete reading of the Guru Granth Sahib continuously lasting approximately forty-eight hours.

khanda: the double-edged sword, one of the emblems of Sikhism.

khuda: one of the names used by Muslims for God - the Holy, al-Quddus.

KIRPAN! kirpan: Sword, one of the 5ks. sword, one of the 5 Ks.

KIRTAN kirtan: singing of songs in praise of God normally to the accompaniment of music.

kuka: nickname given to namdhari Sikhs.

kundalini: the sakti or spirit of power which, when awakened by yoga leads to illumination and control of hidden forces.

langar: free kitchen instituted by Guru Nanak, perhaps influenced by Sufism.

mahant: head of a religious institution or monastery, used of those who controlled gurdwaras.

maharaja: title given to an Indian ruler.

mala: rosary of woollen cord, sometimes called a seli.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

man (mun):	mind.
manji:	small string bed (charpoy), used of 22 areas of jurisdiction established by Guru Amar Das.
manmukh:	one who follows the guidance of his own mind rather than that of the Guru.
mantra:	word or verse often believed to confer power and insight upon the one who possesses it; given by a guru when a chela is initiated.
massand:	authorised leaders of local assemblies of Sikhs.
maya:	the natural world, created by God and therefore real but capable of distracting man from God-centredness, The 5 vices are part of maya.
misl:	an area of political jurisdiction.
mool:	basic.
nam:	Name.
namdhari:	upholder of the Name. A Sikh movement following Guru Ram Singh whom it believes still to be living.
nath:	literally 'master'. A Yoga sect following Saivite and Tantric Buddhist teachings. The traditional founder of the school was Siva.
nihang:	soldier-devotees protectors of the gurdwaras.
nirankari:	worshipper of the Formless.
nirguna:	unconditioned, without qualities.
nitnam: nitneem:	daily 'prayer book' containing important sabads.
pagri:	turban.
Prahlada:	pious son of King Hiranya-Kasipu whose attempt to kill his son prompted Vishnu's fourth descent in the Satya yug (first age) as the Man-Lion, Nir-simha.
pahul:	communion.
paraca:	experience.
param:	supreme.
patasha:	sugar crystals used in preparing amrit.
pauri:	stanza, (literally 'staircase') of a hymn ascending to a climax of praise.

pranayama: yogic technique of breath control

prasad: gift received by devotee at worship.

prasadi: grace.

purana: eighteen books containing the mythology of Hinduism, regarded as important guides to behaviour.

pyare: beloved.

rag: musical form.

Ram Chandra: Rama the charming, seventh avatar of Vishnu.

Rama: seventh avatar of Vishnu.

rasayana: alchemy, transmutting of a base metal into gold through use of a chemical derived from mercury (rasa). Parallels aim of nath-yogi through hatha-yoga.

rishi: sage, usually a hermit.

sabad: word.

sach: true.

sadh sangat: true community (cf sat sang, sat sangat).

sadhana: spiritual discipline ordered by a guru.

sahaj: ultimate state of mystical union.

saguna: with form or qualities, used of God.

sakti: energy of a god expressed in his feminine counterpart.

saktipat: transfer of divine energy from Guru to disciple.

sampradaya: school, sect, tradition.

sangat: gathering, congregation.

sant: popularly a synonym for sadhu. In the context of Sikhism a member of the north Indian tradition to which Kabir and Nanak belonged.

sanyasin: someone initiated into an ascetic order.

Sat Guru: God. By namdharis used of Baba Ram Singh or the living Guru.

satsang:
sat sangat: true fellowship, true community of sadh sangat.

shromani gurdwara parbhandak committee: committee responsible to the Indian government for Sikh affairs in the Punjab.

sishya: disciple.

slok: complete, stanza.

smarta: follower of smrti, the sanskrit tradition (as opposed to vernacular teachings).

smrti: that which has been remembered.

sodhi: kshatriya sub-caste to which the last seven gurus belonged.

srti: that which has been heard, revealed scripture.

takht: throne.

tantra: texts enunciating the forms of sakti worship.

tenth door: (dasam dvar), the mystical orifice opening to ultimate beatitude.

tirath: a place of pilgrimage.

trimurti: 'triple form', the three aspects of divinity, creative, preserving and destructive; often personified in Brahma, Vishnu and Siva.

udasi: (i) order of ascetics claiming Sri Chand, son of Guru Nanak as their founder;
(2) journey, preaching tour.

vaheguru: (waheguru) wonderful lord. According to one tradition formed from the initial letters V (Vishnu) A (Allah) H (Hari).

Vaisakh: (Baisakhi) major Sikh festival commemorating especially the founding of the Khalsa at Anandpur in 1699.

Var: ode, eulogy.

varnashram dharma: code of conduct laid down in the shastras.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Ahluwalia M. M., Kukas, The Freedom Fighters of the Punjab, Bombay, 1965.

Allchin F. R., Kavitali, Allen and Unwin, 1964.

Archer J. C., The Sikhs, Princeton University, 1946.

Avtar Singh, Ethics of the Sikhs, Patiala, 1970.

Basham A. L., The Wonder That Was India, Fontana, 1970.

Bhandarkar R. G., Vaisnavism, Saivism and Minor Religious Systems, (Collected Works, volume 4), Poona, 1929.

Brent P., Godmen of India, Penguin edition, London, 1972.

Carpenter J. G., Theism in Medieval India, London, 1921.

——— Cultural Heritage of India, volumes 3 and 4, 2nd edition, Calcutta, 1956.

Cunningham J. D., A History of the Sikhs, Indian edition, Delhi, 1960.

Danielou A., Hindu Polytheism, New York, 1964.

Dasgupta S., A History of Indian Philosophy, Cambridge, 1922 - 25.

Dasgupta S., An Introduction to Tantric Buddhism, Calcutta, 1958.

Darshan Singh, Indian Bhakti Tradition and the Sikh Gurus, Chandigarh, 1968.

De Bary W. T., (ed.), Sources of Indian Tradition, Columbia University, 1958.

Farquhar J. N., Primer of Hinduism, London, 1912.

Ghurye S. S., Indian Sadhus, 2nd edition, Bombay, 1967.

Gopal Singh, Guru Gobind Singh, New Delhi, 1966.

Grewal J. S., Guru Nanak in History, Chandigarh, 1969.

Grewal J. S. and Bal S. S., Guru Gobind Singh, Chandigarh, 1967.

——— Guru Nanak, Government of India, 1969.

——— Guru Nanak, Life, Times and Teachings, New Delhi, 1969.

——— Guru Nanak, a Homage, New Delhi, 1973.

Grierson G. and Barnett L. D., Lalla Vakyani, London, 1920.

Harnam Singh, The Japji, New Delhi, 1957.

Hastings J., Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, London, 1925.

Hinnells J. H., and Sharpe E. G. Hinduism, Oriel Press, 1972.

Jogendra Singh, Sikh Ceremonies, Bombay, 1941.

Keay F. G., Kabir and His Followers, Calcutta, 1931.

Khushwant Singh, History of the Sikhs, 2 volumes, O.U.P., 1966.

Kohli S. S., Critical Study of the Adi Granth, New Delhi, 1966.

Kohli S. S., Outlines of Sikh Thought, New Delhi, 1966.

Ling T. O., History of Religion East and West, Macmillan, 1968.

Loehlin C. H., The Christian Approach to the Sikh, London, 1966.

Loehlin C. H., The Granth of Guru Gobind Singh and the Khalsa Brotherhood, Lucknow, 1971.

Macauliffe M. A., The Sikh Religion, O.U.P., 1909, reprinted 1963.

Mansukhani G. S., Guru Nanak, New Delhi, 1974.

Mansukhani G. S., Quintessence of Sikhism, 2nd edition, Amritsar, 1965.

McLeod W. H., Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion, O.U.P., 1968.

Mohan Singh, A History of Punjabi Literature, Amritsar, 1956.

Mohan Singh, Kabir and the Bhagti Movement, volume 1, Kabir - His Biography, Lahore, 1934.

Narang G. C., Transformation of Sikhism, 5th edition, New Delhi, 1960.

Noss J. D., Man's Religions, Collier Macmillan, New York, 1963.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com

Parekh C., Shri Vallabhacarya, Life, Teachings and Movement, Rajkot, 1969.

Parkash Singh, Guru Nanak and His Japji, Amritsar, 1969.

Parrinder E. G., Avatar and Incarnation, Faber, 1970.

Parrinder E. G., Worship in the World's Religions, Faber, 1961.

Pritam Singh Gill, Trinity of Sikhism, Jullundur, 1973.

Pocock J., Mind, Body and Wealth, Blackwell, 1974.

———, Rehat Maryada, S. G. P. C., English translation, 1970.

Renou L., Religions of Ancient India, London, 1953, 2nd edition, 1963.

Rose H. A., Glossary of Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North West Frontier, 3 volumes, reprinted Chandigarh, 1970.

Sen K. M., Hinduism, London, 1961.

Sher Singh, Philosophy of Sikhism, Lahore, 1944.

———, Sikhism, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1969.

———, The Sikh Religion : A Symposium, reprinted Calcutta, 1958.

Smart N., Religious Experience of Mankind, New York, 1969.

Taran Singh, Guru Nanak, Indian Religious Thought, Patiala, 1970.

Teja Singh, Growth of Responsibility in Sikhism, Bombay, 1948.

Teja Singh, Sikhism, Its Ideals and Institutions, Lahore, 1938.

Trilochan Singh, Guru Nanak, New Delhi, 1938.

Vaudeville C., Kabir, O.U.P., 1974.

Verme K., Guru Nanak and the Gospel of the Divine Logos. Allahabad, 1969.

Walker B., Hindu World, Allen and Unwin, 1968.

Westcott G. H., Kabir and the Kabir Panth, Cawnpore, 1907.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary

Wilson H. H., Religious Sects of the Hindus, Calcutta, 2nd edition, 1958.

Zaehner R. C., Hinduism, O.U.P., 1962.

Zaehner R. C., Hindu Scriptures, Dent/Everyman, 1966.

Journals and Periodicals.

Papers on Guru Nanak, Punjab History Conference, Patiala, 1970.

Parkh. Punjabi Language and Literature Research Bulletin, Chandigarh University.

Punjab Past and Present, volume 3, 1969, Patiala.

The Sikh Review.

The Spokesman Weekly.

The Spokesman Weekly, Anniversary Numbers.

The Sikh Scriptures.

Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Manmohan Singh, 8 volumes, S.G.P.C., Amritsar 1962 - 1969.

The Hymns of Guru Nanak, Khushwant Singh, Orient Longmans, 1969.

The Sacred Writings of the Sikhs, UNESCO, Allen and Unwin, 1966.

Trumpp E., The Adi Granth, New Delhi, reprinted 1970.

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji eLibrary NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com